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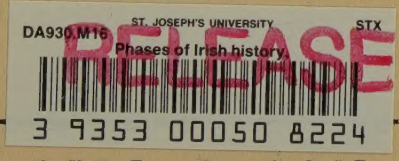

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FOREWORD

The twelve chapters in this volume, delivered as lectures before public audiences in Dublin, make no pretence to form a full course of Irish history for any period. Their purpose is to correct and supplement. For the standpoint taken, no apology is necessary. Neither apathy nor antipathy can ever bring out the truth of history.

I have been guilty of some inconsistency in my spelling of early Irish names, writing sometimes earlier, sometimes later forms. In the Index, I have endeavoured to remedy this defect.

Since these chapters presume the reader's acquaintance with some general presentation of Irish history, they may be read, for the pre-Christian period, with Keating's account, for the Christian period, with any handbook of Irish history in print.

Eoin MacNeill.

I. THE ANCIENT IRISH A CELTIC PEOPLE

EVERY people has two distinct lines of descent —by blood and by tradition. When we consider the physical descent of a people, we regard them purely as animals. As in any breed of animals, so in a people, the tokens of physical descent are mainly physical attributes—such as stature, complexion, the shape of the skull and members, the formation of the features. When we speak of a particular *race* of men, if we speak accurately, we mean a collection of people whose personal appearance and bodily characters, inherited from their ancestors and perhaps modified by climate and occupation, distinguish them notably from the rest of mankind. It is important for us to be quite clear in our minds about this meaning of Race, for the word Race is often used in a very loose and very misleading way in popular writings and discussions. Thus we hear and read of the Latin races, the Teutonic race, the Anglo-Saxon race, the Celtic race. If these phrases had any value in clear thinking, they would imply that in each instance it is possible to distinguish a section of mankind which, by its inherited physical characters, differs notably from the rest of mankind. Now in not one of the instances mentioned is any such distinction known to those who have made

the races of man the subject of their special study. There is no existing Latin race, no Teutonic race, no Anglo-Saxon race, and no Celtic race. Each of the groups to whom these names are popularly applied is a mixture of various races which can be distinguished, and for the most part they are a mixture of the same races, though not in every case in the same proportions.

In the case of the populations which are recognised to be Celtic, it is particularly true that no distinction of race is found among them. And this is true of them even in the earliest times of their history. Tacitus, in the remarkable introductory chapters of his book, "De Moribus Germanorum," gives a brief physical description of the Germans of his time. "Their physical aspect," he says, "even in so numerous a population, is the same for all of them: fierce blue eyes, reddish hair, bodies of great size and powerful only in attack." Upon this the well-read editor of the Elzevir edition of 1573 has the following remarks: "What Tacitus says here of the Germans, the same is said by Florus and Livy in describing the Gauls. . . . Hence," he continues, "it appears that those ancient Gauls and Germans were remarkably similar in the nature of their bodies as well as of their minds." He goes on to develop the comparison, and sums up as follows: "Who then will deny that those earliest Celts were similar to the Germans and were in fact Germans?"

These Latin writers were contemporary witnesses, and among the captives taken by Roman armies they must have seen the men that they describe.

Thus, in early times the Romans observed the same physical semblance in the two peoples, Celts and Germans. It may be pointed out, however, that the physical characteristics on which they lay stress are those which exhibit the greatest difference between these northern peoples and the peoples of southern Europe. For that reason we may suspect a certain element of exaggeration in the description. We may take leave to doubt whether all the Germans of antiquity were fair-haired and blue-eyed, as Tacitus describes them. It was the fair-haired and blue-eyed Germans and Celts that attracted the attention of Latin writers, accustomed to a population almost uniformly dark-haired and dark-eyed, and they would naturally seize upon the points of distinction and regard them as generally typical.

If, then, by the name Celts we cannot properly understand a distinct race, what are we to understand by it? By what criterion do we recognise any ancient population to have been Celts? The answer is undoubted—every ancient people that is known to have spoken any Celtic language is said to be a Celtic people. The term Celtic is indicative of language, not of race. We give the name Celts to the Irish and the Britons because we know that the ancient language of each people is a Celtic language.

A certain amount of enthusiasm, culminating in what is called Pan-Celticism, has gathered around the recognition of this fact that the Irish, the Gaels of Scotland, the Welsh and the Bretons are Celtic peoples. So much favour attached to the name

Celtic that in our own time the Irish language was, so to speak, smuggled into the curricula of the Royal University and of the Intermediate Board under that name. What ancient writers called *opus Hibernicum*, "Irish work," is popularly known in Ireland as Celtic ornament. In the same way people speak of Celtic crosses, and there are even Celtic athletic clubs. There is no small amount of pride in the notion of being Celtic. It is somewhat remarkable, then, to find that throughout all their early history and tradition the Irish and the Britons alike show not the slightest atom of recognition that they were Celtic peoples. We do not find them acknowledging any kinship with the Gauls, or even with each other. In Christian times, their men of letters shaped out genealogical trees tracing the descent of each people from Japhet—and in these genealogies Gael and Briton and Gaul descend by lines as distinct as German and Greek. This absence of acknowledgment of kinship is all the more noteworthy because there is little reason to suppose that, before Latin displaced the Celtic speech of Gaul, the differences of dialect in the Celtic speech of Gaul, Britain, and Ireland were sufficient to prevent intercourse without interpreters.

From this ignorance of their Celtic kinship and origin we must draw one important conclusion. The extraordinary vitality of popular tradition in some respects must be set off by its extraordinary mortality in other respects. There must have been a time when the Celts of Ireland, Britain and Gaul were fully aware that they were nearer akin to each

other than to the Germans and Italians, but this knowledge perished altogether from the popular memory and the popular consciousness.

It was re-discovered and re-established by a Scottish Gael, George Buchanan, in the sixteenth century. Buchanan, in his history of Scotland, published in 1589, dismissed as fabulous that section of the Irish and British genealogies that purported to trace the origin of each people, generation by generation, from Japhet. He was a man of great classical learning. No better refutation could be adduced of the notion that Bacon, who was a child when Buchanan wrote, established the inductive method of scientific proof than the clear and well-marshalled argument by which Buchanan proves from numerous Greek and Latin sources that the Gaels and the Britons were branches of the ancient Celtic people of the Continent.

An account of Buchanan's discourse on this subject will be found in an article by me in the "Irish Review," of December, 1913. Buchanan's discovery seems to have lain dormant, as regards any effect on learning or the popular mind, for more than a century. In his argument he dealt rather severely with the statements of a contemporary Welsh antiquary, Humphrey Llwyd, and this controversy had probably the effect of sowing the seed of what may be called Celtic consciousness in the soil of Welsh learning. In Ireland, though Buchanan's work was doubtless known and read, his theory of the Celtic origin of the Irish people and their language, and of their kinship to the Britons and the Continental

Celts, does not appear to have been thought worth discussion, so firmly established were the ancient accounts which attributed to the Gaels of Ireland a Scythian origin. Yet these ancient accounts, as I propose to show in the third lecture of this series, did not belong to the true national tradition, ran counter to tradition, and owed their invention to the Latin learning of Ireland in the early Christian period.

In 1707 the publication of the first volume of Edward Llwyd's "Archæologia Britannica" exhibits the first fruiting of Buchanan's theory, in the form of a sort of conspectus of the Celtic languages then extant, namely, the Gaelic of Ireland and Scotland, and the British languages of Wales, Cornwall and Brittany. From this time onward, the existence of a group of Celtic peoples may be taken as a recognised fact in the learned world. I do not know whether anyone has yet traced the early stages of the recognition of the same fact in Continental learning.

The Celtic languages now began to attract attention from outside. I ought, however, to note here that already for a brief period the Irish language had seemed about to extend its influence beyond the limits of its own people. It will be remembered that Edmund Spenser, during his residence in Ireland (1586-1598), made some small acquaintance with Irish poetry which was translated for him, and that he was pleased in some degree with its peculiarities. About the same time an English official in Dublin reports to his masters in London

that "the English in Dublin do now all speak Irish," and adds that they take a pleasure in speaking Irish. A primer of the Irish language was composed by the Baron of Delvin for the special use of Queen Elizabeth, and a facsimile of portion of it may be seen in Sir John Gilbert's "National Manuscripts of Ireland."

The growing interest in Celtic literature among outsiders is exemplified in some of the work of the English poet Gray, who died in 1771. His poem of "The Bard," reflected, if it did not initiate, the notions long afterwards fashionable of the character of the Celtic bards and of the spirit of their poetry. Gray had the reputation in his time of being an antiquarian. He made an English version of the vision-poem on the battle of Clontarf from the Icelandic saga of Burnt Njal, and from this same poem part of the inspiration of his "Bard" is acknowledged by him to have been derived. Gray also wrote English versions of some Welsh poems, and the novelty of poetic expression which he borrowed here seems to have baffled for once the critical experience of Johnson, who contents himself with saying that "the language is unlike the language of other poets." "The Bard" was published in 1755, and, if I am not mistaken, its weird rhapsodical spirit contained the germ of the Celtic literary revival, for Gray's "Bard" may be regarded as the literary parent of Macpherson's "Ossian." In 1760, five years after the publication of "The Bard," appeared the first collection of Macpherson's pretended translations, entitled

"Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland." The consequences of this publication are fitly described by Dr. Magnus MacLean: "The arrival of James Macpherson marks a great moment in the history of Celtic literature. It was the signal for a general resurrection. It would seem as if he sounded the trumpet, and the graves of ancient manuscripts were opened, the books were read, and the dead were judged out of the things that were written in them." In 1764 was published Evans's "Specimens of the Poetry of the Ancient Welsh Bards"—which supplied Gray with fresh material. In 1784 appeared "Musical and Poetical Relics of the Welsh Bards," and from that time onward the stream of translations from Welsh to English was fairly continuous. Notwithstanding the controversy that soon arose about the authenticity of Macpherson's compositions, their direct influence and vogue went on increasing for half a century. Among those who shared in the Macpherson craze were Goethe and Napoleon Bonaparte. In France, de Villemarqué published his "Chants populaires de la Bretagne," a collection of poems from the Breton. In Scotland, Macpherson had several imitators. In Wales, the new movement took shape in the revival of the National Eisteddfod in 1819. In Ireland, the first fruits of Macpherson's genius are found in Walker's "Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards," published in 1786, and in Charlotte Brooke's "Reliques of Irish Poetry," published in 1789. The originals in this case were genuine, including a number of poems of the kind

called, since Macpherson's time, Ossianic.[1] The English versions supplied by Miss Brooke were in close imitation of the style and diction of Macpherson. The same influence extends to Hardiman's "Irish Minstrelsy," published in 1831.

The expansion of the new Celtic consciousness is exemplified in the publication in 1804 of a tract in French on the Irish Alphabet by Jean Jacques Marcel. The first important philological treatise on the Celtic languages was published by the French philologist Pictet in 1837, dealing with "the affinity of the Celtic languages to Sanscrit." Next year, 1838, appeared Bopp's work in German, showing the relation of the Celtic languages to Sanscrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, German, etc. The Celtic literary enthusiasm was henceforth supplemented by solid scientific research.

In these particulars is presented, I think, a fairly accurate sketch of the wholly modern development of the Celtic consciousness. I wish to recall here the fact that from the earliest traceable traditions of the Gaelic people down to the time of George Buchanan, there is not found the slightest glimmer of recognition that the Celts of Ireland were Celts, or that they were more nearly akin to the Celts of Britain and the Continent than to any other population of white men. The second fact which I wish particularly to emphasise is that throughout all its history the term Celtic bears a linguistic and not a racial significance.

[1] The Irish term for this class of poetry is "Fianaidheacht," and is of great antiquity.

It need hardly be re-stated here that the Celts are a linguistic offshoot of a prehistoric people whose descendants—also in the line of language—comprise many ancient and modern populations in Europe and Asia. It would be out of place now to discuss the central location from which the various branches of this prehistoric people spread themselves over so wide an area. Indeed, it is a facile and fanciful assumption to suppose that the spreading took place from one central habitat. It is enough to say that, whereas the earlier philologists took for granted that the original population, before its division into various linguistic groups, was located in Western Asia, the later philologists are strongly inclined to place its home in Europe, in the region south-east of the Baltic Sea.

The oldest known geographical descriptions of Europe are those of Hecatæus, who flourished about 500 years before the Christian Era, and Herodotus, about half a century after him. Their knowledge of the European mainland, north of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean and its inlets, was of the most vague and general kind. They divided the whole of northern and middle Europe between two peoples, the Scythians in the eastern, and the Celts in the western parts. They also knew of the Iberians in the south-west, in the Spanish peninsula and the adjoining parts of France. Herodotus, however, recognised to the west of the Celts a people whom he calls Kunēsioi and Kunētai, and in the furthest north of Europe a population distinct from the Celts and Scythians, but unknown to him by

any name of their own, for he calls them Hyperboreans, *i.e.*, out and out northerns. In the time of Eratosthenes, about 200 B.C., this knowledge does not appear to have been very much increased among the Greeks. They knew, however, of the existence of the islands of Ireland, which they called Ierne, and Britain, which they called Albion, and also of a country beyond the Baltic; but they still divided the northern mainland of Europe between the Celts and the Scythians.

I have already remarked how ancient Irish tradition ignores the Celtic origin and affinities of the Irish. We may go farther and say that our ancient writers, when they set about exploring the geographical knowledge of the world that came to them in Latin writings, had it very definitely in their minds that the Irish were not of Celtic origin; for, of the three great populations of northern and western Europe known to the oldest classical writers —the Iberians, the Celts, and the Scythians—they excluded the Celts, and included the other two, some selecting the Iberians and others the Scythians as the ancestral people from which the Gaels were descended.

The reason why to the Greek mind, in the early centuries of history, the Celts appeared to occupy so much of Middle Europe and to occupy it so exclusively, was I think this: the Celts at that time actually occupied the upper valleys of the Danube, the Rhone, the Rhine, and the Elbe, and the high ground between. These rivers were the principal highways of such transcontinental commerce as then

existed, and this commerce was probably considerable, comprising various metals, salt, amber, etc. Whatever came and went in the course of transcontinental trade from north-western Europe to the Mediterranean countries followed trade routes which lay through the central region north of the Alps, and all this region was held by the Celts. In this way, the Celts seem to be more extensively spread over northern middle Europe than they actually were.

Archæology takes us back farther and tells us more than history in relation to the Celts while they were as yet, so far as we know, located solely or mainly in the mid-European region to the north of the Alps. It is not questioned that the ancient cemetery discovered and explored many years ago at Hallstatt in Upper Austria belonged to Celts and that the curious remains of art and industry found there are the work of a Celtic people. The period assigned for that work begins in the ninth century before the Christian Era and may extend onward for several centuries. The discoveries indicate an organised and progressive community, among whose resources were agriculture and the working of mines for metals and salt; but the principal fact disclosed is that, already in that early time, the Celts were acquainted with the use and manufacture of iron. In the northern parts of Europe, in Scandinavia, Britain and Ireland, as archæologists are agreed, the Iron Age did not make its appearance until several centuries later.

We need not doubt that it was this possession of

iron in abundance and of skill in its manufacture, at a time when neighbouring peoples found in bronze the highest class of material for their implements of industry and war, that gave the Celts the power and prosperity which they long enjoyed in Mid-Europe and enabled them to conquer and colonize all the countries that surrounded them.

One effect of the mastery of iron, for a people occupying an inland region with small facilities for water-traffic, was that the Celts acquired a notable skill in the making of vehicles. From them in a later age the Romans borrowed the names of nearly every variety of wheeled vehicle that the Romans used: *carrus* or *carrum*, *carpentum*, *esseda*, *rheda*, *petorritum*. From this it obviously follows that the Celts were also great road-makers. During the nine years that Julius Cæsar spent in the conquest of Transalpine Gaul, and marched his legions in every direction over that vast region, it is quite evident that he was operating in a country already well supplied with roads.

The earliest recorded expansion of the Celts from the region north of the Alps was over northern Italy, and no historian supposes or suggests that the first Celtic occupation of northern Italy was earlier than about 600 B.C. This item ought to be borne in mind, for it has an important bearing on the date of the early Celtic migrations to Britain and Ireland. It was probably about the same time that they began to move westward across the Rhone, occupying the parts of France between the Garonne on the south and the English Channel on the north, which

parts are specifically described by Julius Cæsar as Gallia Celtica, Celtic Gaul. Between 500 and 400 B.C. they spread south-westward into Spain, apparently more as conquerors than as colonists, for the resultant of the Celtic occupation of the Spanish Peninsula was the formation of a mixed people, partly Celts and partly Iberians, whom ancient writers distinguish from the Celts by giving them what we may call a hyphenated name, Celtiberians. We are not to imagine from this that Celtic conquests elsewhere were of an exterminating character, or that they did not result in a fusion of peoples. The notion that the migratory conquests of antiquity resulted in the displacement of one population by another is one of the favourite illusions of popular history. In Spain no doubt the Celtic element was relatively less numerous than in Gallia Celtica, and also perhaps the Celtic civilisation became less dominant, for the Iberians were in touch more or less with another and still more highly developed civilisation, that of the Phœnicians. That there was a somewhat distinctive civilisation south of the Garonne is clearly to be inferred from Cæsar's account, which tells us that the people of Celtic Gaul differed from those of Aquitaine, as well as from those of Belgic Gaul, in language, culture, and institutions.

In the fourth century B.C. a second wave of Celtic migration poured over Italy. The Celts in this movement captured and destroyed the city of Rome. But they also appear to have destroyed the predominance of the Etrurians, and thereby to have

facilitated the later imperial expansion of the Roman power. There was also an eastward Celtic movement along the Danube. In the third century B.C. the Celts overran most of what is called the Balkan Peninsula, including Greece, and in 278 B.C. large bodies of them passed over into Asia Minor and settled in the country which after them was named Galatia.

Let it be noted at this point that so far as history casts light on the subject, the known period of Celtic expansion on the Continent lies within the years 650 B.C. and 250 B.C. We shall have to recur to this fact when we come to consider, in the following lecture, the probable date of the Celtic colonisation of Ireland. We shall see also that the evidence from archæology leads to the same conclusion as the evidence from history.

History recognises the expansion of the Celts from inland and central Europe southward, westward and eastward, but is silent about any expansion northward. No one doubts that in these early times the parts of Europe northward of the old Celtic country already described were occupied by the Germans, but Greek and Latin writings have no word of the Germans until the last quarter of the third century B.C. Yet we know from archæology that there was trade intercourse long before that time between the Mediterranean countries and the shores of the Baltic, extending even to Scandinavia. As geographical facts, the Baltic and Scandinavia were known to the Greeks, if only vaguely known to them, in the time of Eratosthenes, *i.e.*, about 200 B.C. How is

it, then, that the Germans are not mentioned by that name or by any name? I suggest that the reason was that the Germans of that period were so much under Celtic domination that they were not recognised as a distinct people of importance.

The first mention of Germans in history is found in the Roman Acta Triumphalia for the year 222 B.C., in the record of the battle of Clastidium. Clastidium, now called Casteggio, is in northern Italy, on the south side of the river Po and a few miles from that river. It is a little west of the meridian of Milan, which at the time of the battle was Mediolanum, the chief town of the Insubrian Gauls. In the battle, the Roman consul Marcellus overcame the Insubrians and gained the *spolia opima* by slaying with his own hand their commander Virdumarus. The Acta Triumphalia state that he triumphed "over the Insubrian Gauls and the Germans." Now so far as is known or thought probable there was no German population at the time settled anywhere within hundreds of miles of Clastidium, whereas the Insubrian Gauls were settled on the spot or in its near neighbourhood. Moreover, unless the Germans were there fighting in considerable force, it is most unlikely that any notice of them would have appeared in the record. The commander was a Gaul, bearing an undoubted Celtic name. Therefore the Germans at Clastidium were not fighting for their own hand, they had not come there as invaders. Thus we are brought to the interesting conclusion that, on this first appearance of the Germans in history, they had been brought from their own country, hundreds

of miles away, to assist a Celtic people resident in the valley of the Po. To assist them in what capacity? Undoubtedly either as hired troops or as forces levied on a subject territory. Whichever view we take, the presence of German forces at the battle of Clastidium in 222 B.C. must be regarded as an indication that the German people, or portion of them, were still at that time under Celtic predominance. I say "still at that time," because it will be seen that the Celtic ascendancy over the Germans soon afterwards came to an end.

What is thus inferred from the historical record is corroborated by philology. A number of words of Celtic origin are found spread through the whole group of Germanic languages, including the Scandinavian languages and English, which was originally a mixture of Low German dialects. Some of these words are especially connected with the political side of civilisation and are therefore especially indicative of Celtic political predominance at the time of their adoption into Germanic speech. Thus the German word *reich*, meaning realm or royal dominion, is traced to the Celtic *rigion*, represented in early Irish by *rige*, meaning kingship. From the Celtic word *ambactus*, used by Caesar in the sense of "client" or "dependent," indicating one of the retainers of a Gallic nobleman, but originally signifying "one who is sent about," a minister or envoy —from *ambactus* is derived the German word *amt*, meaning "office, charge, employment." From *ambactus* are also derived the words *embassy* and *ambassador*, with their kindred terms in the Romance

languages. From the Celtic word *dunon*, a fortified place, represented in Irish by *dun*, is derived the word *town* in English and the cognate words in the other Germanic languages. Professor Marstrander holds that several of the names of the numerals in all the Germanic languages, and therefore in the original German speech from which they have diverged, are formed from or influenced by Celtic names of the same numerals. If this is so, it indicates a thoroughly penetrating Celtic influence among the ancient Germans, for the names of the numerals may be regarded as among the most native elements of speech, so much so that it is said that facility in the speaking of two languages rarely exists to the degree of being able to reckon numbers with equal readiness in both, and that the language a person uses in ordinary reckoning must be regarded as his native and natural speech.

This matter of the early intermingling of Celts and Germans in northern Mid-Europe will be afterwards seen to have a special interest in reference to the Celtic colonisation of Britain and Ireland. Before concluding the evidence I have to bring forward on the subject, it will make the drift of the matter clearer if I state the later outcome of the Celtic migrations northward among the Germanic population. We have already seen that, as archaeologists are agreed, the Celts north of the Alps were in possession of iron long before the use and manufacture of iron was established in the more northern parts of Europe. It is mainly to this advantage that we may ascribe the predominance acquired

by the Celts among the Germans. In the German regions, however, the Celts were for the most part an ascendant minority. Their domination must have lasted for several centuries. A time came when, in those parts which in the Celts were numerically and otherwise in greatest strength, a fusion of peoples took place, resulting in a Celto-Germanic population, Celtic in language but mainly Germanic in race. Meanwhile, the less blended section of the Germans, retaining their native language, had acquired the craft of ironwork, and were advancing in civilisation and no doubt increasing at the same time in numbers. Eventually the German-speaking Germans became more powerful than the once dominant Celtic minority and more powerful also than the Celto-Germanic folk who had become Celtic in language. A sense of distinct nationality grew up between the two populations. The Celticised Germans were located in western Germany, towards the Rhine, the un-Celticised Germans farther east. Under hostile pressure from the German-speaking element, the Celtic-speaking element were forced westwards across the Rhine into Gaul. Here they in turn pressed back the Celts who had settled in north-eastern Gaul, and modern events will help to fix in the mind the fact that this overflow of Celto-Germans into Gaul extended as far west as the river Marne, where it was brought to a stand by the resistance of the earlier Celtic inhabitants. The date of this migration was probably later than that of the battle of Clastidium, 222 B.C., when, as we have seen, the Celts appear

to have still held sway over the Germans. The Celto-Germanic settlers between the Rhine and the Marne were the Belgae of Cæsar's time.

At first sight, this account may seem to be too precise an effort to fill up a blank in history, but the testimony of Cæsar and Tacitus, witnesses of prime authority, seems to leave no room for any alternative view.

Cæsar is the first writer in whom any mention of the Belgae is found. Holding the Gallic command for about nine years, he reduced the whole of Gaul to obedience to the Roman power. For him, Gaul, Gallia, signified the whole country between the Rhine and the Pyrenees. All its inhabitants in general were named Galli by him, but we also find that he uses the name Galli in a more precise sense as proper to the people of those parts which were not occupied by the Belgae. He also calls this people Celtae, Celts. Therefore in Cæsar's mind the Belgae were less Gallic and less Celtic than their neighbours to the west. His evidence on this subject however is much more precise.

The Rhine was for Cæsar the main boundary line between Gaul and Germany, between the Belgae and the Germans. The Belgae, he states, differ from the Celtae, as these from the Aquitani, in language, culture, and institutions. The difference between the Celtae proper and the Aquitani has already been accounted for. The Aquitani, bordering on Spain, were the same Celtiberian mixture as the people of Spain; they were Celtic, or mainly so, in language, but otherwise mainly Iberian. I am proceeding to

show that the difference between the Celtae and the Belgae is to be explained in a similar way. The Belgae were likewise Celtic in language, at all events mainly so, but otherwise they were mainly Germanic. When Cæsar says that the three divisions of Gaul differed from each other in language, we must understand that he refers to broad distinctions of dialect, for the names of persons and places in Belgic Gaul at that time appear to the reader to be quite as Celtic as those in Gallia Celtica or western Gaul. Cæsar tells us that the Belgae are ruder, less civilised and more warlike than the Celtae or Galli more properly so called, and his explanation for this is that they have less commerce and less intercourse with outsiders, and so are less softened by refinement and luxury. This is interesting, because it implies that Gallia Celtica had a sufficient degree of commerce, intercourse, refinement and luxury to considerably soften down the character of its inhabitants.

The westward and southward pressure of the Germans, then a very powerful and numerous people, was in full force in Cæsar's time, so much so that it seems certain that Cæsar's conquest of Gaul came just in time to stay and delay that tide of Germanic invasion which overran Gaul some centuries later. His first operations in Gaul were against the Helvetii, whose country corresponded to the modern Switzerland. He tells us that the Belgae are at continual war with the Germans along the Rhine, and also that the Helvetii in their own country fight almost daily battles with the Germans. In the first year of

Cæsar's Gallic command, the Helvetii came to a decision to migrate from their country westward, and Cæsar's first campaign was conducted with the purpose of forcing them to return to their own country. He ordered them to return thither, he states, lest the Germans should take possession of the territory and thus become neighbours to the old Roman province in southern Gaul.

Cæsar states plainly that the Belgae for the most part are of German origin; that in former times they had crossed the Rhine and dispossessed the Galli (here he used the name Galli as proper to the other inhabitants of Gaul in distinction from the Belgae). He indicates that, after this migration, they had offered a successful resistance to the invasion of the Cimbri and Teutones (between 113 and 102 B.C.).

Modern Frenchmen, though their national name is in origin the name of a Germanic people, show a tendency, easily understood, to minimise the Germanic element in their composition, and M. D'Arbois de Jubainville, dealing with Cæsar's statement that the Belgae were mainly of Germanic origin, seeks to explain that this was true geographically not ethnographically, that they came from German lands but did not come of German ancestry. Against the plain statement of a contemporary observer, such explanations are always to be received with caution. In this instance, there is corroborative evidence which indicates that Cæsar's words are to be taken at their face value. Cæsar also tells us that the Condrusi, Eburones, Cærosi and Paemani "uno

nomine Germani vocantur"—are called by the common name of Germans. Again he says that the Segni and Condrusi are "ex gente et numero Germanorum"—of the German nation and so accounted. Strabo, writing within a century of Cæsar, says that "the Nervii are a Germanic people." According to Cæsar, the Nervii had no commerce, avoided wine and other luxuries, and were fierce men of great valour. They led the rest of the Belgae in opposing him. Tacitus is a hardly less valid authority, for his father-in-law Agricola had been engaged in long campaigns against the Germans in the Rhine country. "The Treveri and the Nervii," he says, "are especially forward in asserting their German origin, as though by this boast of race to be distinguished from the pacific character of the Gauls." It was surely not a geographical origin that was claimed in such a way. The Treveri dwelt on the west side of the Rhine. They were a Celtic-speaking people, and unlike most of the inhabitants of Gaul they seem to have retained their Celtic language throughout the period of Roman domination, for St. Jerome, writing in the late part of the fourth century, says that "the Galatians (of Asia Minor), apart from the Greek language, which all the East speaks, have a language of their own almost the same as the Treveri." In one respect the Treveri, Cæsar tells us, resembled the Germans of his time—they excelled in cavalry; and his continuator, Hirtius, writes that "in fierceness and in manner of life they differed little from the Germans." The Advatuci, he writes, "were descendants of the

Cimbri and Teutoni." All these peoples dwelt in Belgic Gaul and came under the common appellation of Belgae. In addition to Cæsar's statement that the Belgae as he learned, not supposed, were, for the most part of German origin, we have detailed evidence that, of about eighteen States composing Belgic Gaul, no fewer than eight, in Cæsar's time and long after it, were still accounted to be German.

On the other hand, then and afterwards, a number of peoples reckoned to be Celtic continued to inhabit countries to the east of the Rhine. The Tencteri and the Usipetae, on the German side of the Rhine, were Celts, according to Dio Cassius. Tacitus, speaking of the Helvetii and the Boii, says that "both are Gallic nations," yet in another passage he speaks of "the Boii, a nation of the Germans." Still further east dwelt the Cotini and the Osi, of whom he writes: "The Cotini by their use of the Gallic language and the Osi by their use of the Pannonic language are proved not to be Germans": from which it appears that language was the criterion by which the Romans were accustomed to distinguish Germans from Celts. Again Tacitus writes: "The Triboci, Vangiones and Nemetes are certainly Germans," but modern German authorities recognise that the Triboci and Nemetes are Celtic in these very names. Of the Aestyi, dwelling apparently on the northern seaboard of Germany, Tacitus says that their language resembles that of Britain.

Further evidence of Celtic occupation of regions considered German in Cæsar's time and ever since then is afforded by a number of ancient place-names.

For example, there were two towns or stations named Carrodunon, *i.e.* "wagon-fortress," one on the river Oder, the other in the upper valley of the Vistula. Other Celtic place-names, like Lugidunum, Eburodunum, Meliodunum, are found in central Germany.

Tacitus confirms the evidence of Cæsar to the effect that the Belgae were a Germano-Celtic people who came westward over the Rhine and conquered part of the country already occupied by the Celts. "Those," he says, "who first crossed the Rhine and expelled the Gauls were then named Germans but now Tungri." The Tungri inhabited a part of Belgic Gaul between the Nervii and the Treveri.

It seems to me, then, to be certain that the Belgae not only came into Gaul from Germany, but were themselves a mixed population of Celts and Germans speaking a Celtic dialect. Holder assigns their migration into Gaul to the third century B.C. It is, however, undesirable to attempt to fix anything but a somewhat extended period for migratory movements of the kind. The instance of the Helvetii proves that down to Cæsar's time the Celts in contact with the Germans were still in a very mobile condition.

Before using the facts hitherto stated and the conclusions derived from them to throw whatever light they can on the Celtic colonisation of Ireland, it may be well to state in a general way what can be said as to the stage of civilisation reached by the continental Celts before their subjugation by the Romans.

Some modern writers, but not very recently, have

written about a Celtic Empire in ancient Europe. The nearest approach to authority for the existence of such an empire is a statement by Livy, who says: "While the elder Tarquin reigned in Rome, the supremacy among the Celts belonged to the Bituriges. They gave a king to the Celtic land. Ambigatus was his name, a very mighty man in valour and in his private and public resources, under whose rule Gaul was so abounding in men and in the fruits of the earth that it seemed impossible to govern so great a population."

The most that can be made of this passage, supposing that Livy had it on better authority than some other parts of his history, is that at one time the Bituriges held what the Greeks called hegemony, a political primacy among the Gauls, and this, too, only in the time of a single king. It may reflect a genuine Celtic tradition, going back to the time when the Celts were still a compact nation inhabiting a relatively small territory.

When we come to contemporary evidence of the political condition of the Celts, we find that everywhere on the continent and in Asia Minor, their form of government resembles that of the Roman Republic. There are no kings, and the power of the state is vested in a senate with certain high executive officers. The Celtic form of government in historical time was that of a patrician republic. The Celtic people was divided into a large number of small states without any organised superior power. From time to time, however, one or other of these states might acquire a degree of political pre-eminence

over a group of neighbouring states, forming a loose federation in which it took chief direction of the common affairs. We find the same tendency among the states of ancient Greece. In Asia Minor, the three states of the Galatae formed themselves into a strict federation, with a fixed constitution, a common council of state and a common executive both civil and military.

So far as I have been able to trace, wherever the Greeks and Romans came in contact with Celts so as to acquire a closer knowledge of Celtic affairs, they found this kind of patrician republican government. Cæsar found no kings in Transalpine Gaul, and the governing authority, when he mentions it, belongs to senates and magistrates, *i.e.*, chief officers of state. It was apparently so in Spain a century earlier; and in distant Lusitania, corresponding to the modern Portugal, the most western Celtic region on the continent, in resisting the Roman conquest the chief command is held by Viriatus, who is not called a king by the Roman and Greek historians, nor is any king mentioned in his time. Nor do we read of kings in Cisalpine Gaul. Thus from farthest east to farthest west, the patrician republican form of government seems to have prevailed in all Celtic communities with the probable exception of Ireland; and this was probably their political condition as far back as 300 B.C., or earlier, before the Galatians passed into Asia Minor.

At some earlier period, the Celts were undoubtedly governed by kings. The word for king, represented by the Irish word *ri*, is widely exemplified in ancient

Celtic names. From it, as I have already remarked, the Germanic languages took their word for kingdom or realm. Sometimes it is found in the names of peoples, *e.g.*, the Bituriges, Caturiges, etc.; sometimes in the names of men, *e.g.*, Dumnorix, Ambiorix, Vercingetorix. We find evidence, too, of a strong anti-monarchical sentiment, as among the Romans. The law of the Helvetii made it a capital offence, under penalty of being burned alive, to aim at autocratic power.

Not only the Celts, but the Germans of that time, were governed without kings, as Tacitus records. He adds, however, that they appointed kings to command them when they went to war. Here we have a parallel to the Roman dictatorship, the vesting of the power of the republic in the hands of a single ruler during a time of critical warfare.

I have already mentioned the proficiency of the Celts in the construction of wheeled vehicles, and the consequent deduction that they were practised in the making of roads. The passage already quoted from Livy shows that, with all their military ardour, they were known to be active in agriculture; and this is corroborated by other ancient authorities. The countries occupied by the Celts excelled in ordinary agriculture not only during what we may call Celtic times but in subsequent ages, and it is these countries that have furnished the most excellent breeds of domestic animals—cattle, sheep, poultry, dogs.

Originally an inland people, the Celts who occu-

pied the seaboard soon became proficient in navigation. Cæsar bears witness to their skill in shipbuilding, and he seems to have found no great difficulty in collecting from the Belgic coast a sufficient fleet of ships to transport his army and supplies to Britain.

From the Greek settlement at Massilia (Marseille) two arts especially appear to have spread among the Celts of Transalpine Gaul: sculpture and the use of letters. The remains of Celtic sculpture in Gaul show evident signs of Greek origin. Cæsar makes the remarkable statement that the Gauls in his time use Greek writing in almost all their business, both public and private. The Romans of Cæsar's time had not long emerged, under Greek influence, from a state of comparative illiteracy, as every student of Latin literature must recognise. Among the spoils of the Helvetii captured by Cæsar, he found a complete census of the people written in Greek characters. Inscriptions in the Celtic language before the Roman conquest are in Greek characters, except in Cisalpine Gaul, where the characters are Etruscan.

On the subject of ancient Celtic art on the continent, reference may be made to the book by Romilly Allen, from which also a good idea of the skill and taste of the Celts in metal work may be obtained.

In general, it is clear that the Celts were a highly progressive people with a strong civilising tendency. Under the Druids, the western Celts developed a system of education and some kind of philosophy.

With regard to their religion and to the part played by the Druids in Celtic life, I have summarised my own studies in a brochure entitled "Celtic Religion," which is published by the Catholic Truth Society of England.

II. THE CELTIC COLONISATION OF IRELAND AND BRITAIN

IN the preceding lecture, I have claimed to show that, so far as positive knowledge goes, the period of Celtic expansion from Mid-Europe lies between the years 600 B.C. and 250 B.C. The spread of the Celtic peoples and of their power was arrested by a movement of German expansion on the north, beginning perhaps about 200 B.C., and by the growth of the Roman Empire, for which a starting point may be found in the final subjugation of Etruria, 265 B.C. I have also claimed to show that there was a large northward expansion of the Celts, resulting in a partial fusion of Celts and Germans, and that this Celto-Germanic population was afterwards for the most part, but not all, forced westward across the Rhine by the more purely German population, and was represented by the Belgae of Cæsar's time.

From the objects discovered at Hallstatt, the early period of Celtic art in the Iron Age is called by archæologists the Hallstatt period. It is succeeded by a later stage and higher development of ornamental art, exemplified in discoveries at La Tène in Switzerland. The period in which this higher development is found has been named the La Tène period; but the same stage of Celtic art is exemplified by objects discovered in the valley of the Marne in northern France, and the term "Marnian

period" is used by French archæologists as an equivalent of "La Tène period." So far as I am aware these Marnian remains represent the earliest known substantial appearance of Celtic work, of Celtic activities of any kind, in the north-western parts of Europe. The La Tène or Marnian period is estimated to begin about 400 B.C., and not earlier than 500 B.C. This estimated date is an important part of the evidence that goes to establish the date of the Celtic migrations to Britain and Ireland.

Before going more fully into the evidence, it is necessary to deal with the theory which at present holds the field in British archæology, and which is based principally on the authority of the late Sir John Rhys. So completely has his theory dominated, that we find it stated in summary in books for general instruction. I find a good exemplification in the volume on Lincolnshire of the Cambridge County Geographies, a series devised for school study and general information. The following paragraph purports to tell us how Britain was peopled before the Roman occupation:

"We may now pause for a moment," says the writer, "to consider who these people were who inhabited our land in these far-off ages. Of Palæolithic man we can say nothing. His successors, the people of the Later Stone Age, are believed to have been largely of Iberian stock—people, that is, from south-western Europe—who brought with them their knowledge of such primitive arts and crafts as were then discovered. How long they remained in undisturbed possession of our land we do not know,

but they were later conquered or driven westward by a very different race of Celtic origin—the Goidels or Gaels, a tall light-haired people, workers in bronze, whose descendants and language are to be found to-day in many parts of Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man. Another Celtic people poured into the country about the fourth century B.C.—the Brythons or Britons, who in turn dispossessed the Gaels, at all events as far as England and Wales are concerned. The Brythons were the first users of iron in our country."

So far the quotation. The writer is a man of scientific education, a master of arts, a doctor of medicine, and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. This is the age of science, not of credulity, and in matters of science men of scientific education are believed to require scientific proof before they state anything as a fact. If it is the age of science, it is also the age of invention. The statements made in the passage I have quoted are definite enough. In fairness to their writer, however, I shall quote his next paragraph, in which this definite assurance is somewhat qualified:

"The Romans," he writes, "who first reached our shores in B.C. 55, held the land till about A.D. 410; but in spite of the length of their domination they do not seem to have left much mark on the people. After their departure, treading close on their heels, came the Saxons, Jutes, and Angles. But with these, and with the incursions of the Danes and Irish, we have left the uncertain region of the Prehistoric Age for the surer ground of History."

From what is said just afterwards on the surer ground of History, we are prepared in some measure to assess the value of what has been said, very definitely indeed, in the uncertain region of the Prehistoric Age :

"Of the Celtic population of this county [Lincolnshire]," we are told in continuation, "at the time of the Roman invasion, but few traces are left, thus contrasting greatly with what has happened in counties such as Somerset, Cornwall, and the wilder parts of Wales, and the Lake district. where the Brythons (hence the name Britain) fled before the Roman advance and later from the Saxons. These Celts, belonging to the tribe of Coritani, have left little impression on the names of places (Lincoln itself being an exception), and probably none on the actual people of Lincolnshire. On the other hand, the Saxon invasion and settlement must have been complete early in the sixth century."

Now let us consider first what the English reader and student is asked to believe in regard of the effect of strictly historical movements on the population of an English county. "The Romans," we are told, during about four centuries of occupation, "do not seem to have left much mark on the people." The writer's object is to show from what early population elements the modern population is composed. By what tokens does he assure us that the prolonged Roman occupation left no permanent element behind ? Is it by the scarcity of Roman noses in the Lincolnshire of to-day ? Let us regard the facts.

For generation after generation, the Romans sent legion after legion of their soldiers into Britain. These legionaries were not all Italians. They were recruited from various parts of the Roman Empire. We know that one of the Roman emperors, holding command in Britain, took a woman of British birth to wife, and that Constantine the Great was their child. Are we asked to believe that the thousands upon thousands of Roman legionaries in Britain lived a life of celibacy, and left no descendants after them? The city of Lincoln was itself no mere military station but a Roman colony, Lindi Colonia, and the volume from which I quote shows that Lincolnshire has produced very extensive traces of its Roman occupation, civil as well as military. The county appears to have contained no fewer than six Roman military stations, and was traversed by four Roman roads.

In the preceding lecture, I have alluded to that common illusion of popular history through which people are led to imagine that the migratory conquests of ancient times led to the extermination of the older inhabitants by the newcomers. On this same illusion, lodged in the mind of a man of scientific education, is based the notion that the Roman occupation left no mark, in the ethnographical sense, on the later population. We find the definite expression of this illusion in the words in which the writer professes to account for the total disappearance of the Celtic population of Lincolnshire, on whose people, he says, still speaking ethnographically, the Celts have probably left no

impression. "The Brythons," he tells us, "fled before the Roman advance." Bear well in mind that we are now on the surer ground of history. The Roman conquest of Britain was completed by Agricola in the year 80 of the Christian era. We have the account of this conquest from a contemporary authority, Tacitus, who was son-in-law to the conqueror, Agricola. In a remarkable passage, Tacitus tells how the Britons behaved after Agricola had warred down their pride:

"During the following winter," he writes, "Agricola was occupied in carrying out a most salutary policy. The Britons were a rude people, dwelling in the open country, and for that reason they were readily disposed to war. Agricola's aim was to reduce them to peace and a life of ease by ministering to their pleasures. He exhorted them in private and assisted them in public to build temples, places of assembly, and houses. [He means, in the Roman manner, and obviously refers especially to the noble and wealthy of the Britons.] Those who were quick to act in this way he praised, those who were reluctant he punished; so that they could not avoid competing with each other for distinction. He set about providing the culture of a liberal education for the sons of their chief men, and he used to award the Britons the palm of excellence over the Gauls in their studies, so that those who not long before refused to speak the Roman tongue were now actually eager to exhibit their eloquence in Latin. Even our fashion of dress became honourable among them, and the toga was

quite generally worn. By degrees they yielded to the attractive apparatus of vices, lounging in covered walks, frequenting public baths, and enjoying elegant banquets." The comment of the Imperial historian on the real aim and character of this "salutary policy" carried out by his father-in-law has a cynical frankness which is quite refreshing in comparison with the studied attitude of moral justification that we might expect from a modern Tacitus: "And this," he says, "was called civilisation by the ignorant Britons, whereas it was in fact an element of their enslavement."

We have here a graphic picture of the British nobility, under distinguished patronage, making themselves familiar with the luxuries and vices of Imperial Rome, and their sons at school learning to become eloquent Dempseys in the conqueror's tongue. Compare it with Dr. Sympson's statement on the surer ground of History: "The Brythons fled before the Roman advance," to take refuge in the remoter and wilder parts of the island. Having already fled before the Romans, they again fled, we are told, before the Saxons. There is just as much historical foundation for the one statement as for the other. I remember reading, in one of Archbishop Trench's works on the origin and growth of the English language, a list of words which passed from the ancient British tongue into Anglo-Saxon—most of them being names of things used in ordinary rural industry, and the conclusion drawn from this class of words, that, under the Anglo-Saxon conquest and occupation, the

menial work of the country continued to be done by the conquered Britons. There is an old yarn about a whaling crew in the northern seas. The cold was so intense that, when the seamen tried to speak, the words were frozen hard as they came from their lips and could be heard falling on the deck. It must have been under the operation of some similarly marvellous phenomenon, shall we say the excessive coolness of the Anglo-Saxons, that they were able to capture and preserve the vocabulary of the fugitive Britons.

In my first lecture, I have attempted to trace the somewhat academic origin and growth of the modern Celtic consciousness. The Anglo-Saxon consciousness has a very similar history. It begins in learned circles of the reign of Elizabeth, when, under the stimulus of the Anglican controversy and the special patronage of Archbishop Parker, a keen interest was aroused in the remains of Anglo-Saxon literature. The Anglo-Saxon craze appears to reach its high-water mark in some American universities. I wonder if it will survive the war. The compiler of the Cambridge Geography of Lincolnshire has outdone Attila himself in extermination. He has completely wiped out five successive populations to make Lincolnshire an exclusive habitat for pure-blooded Low Germans.

Let us now return to the paragraph which summarizes Sir John Rhys's theory of the peopling of prehistoric Britain. Its first article is this: "Of Palæolithic man we can say nothing," and we pass on to "his successors." The people who in-

habited Britain in the Early Stone Age are extirpated in a phrase of six words. It is a less interesting, if less appalling fate than that which overtook Parthalon's people in the Book of Invasions. They all died of a plague, and then apparently the dead buried their dead in "the plague-cemetery of Parthalon's people"—Támhlacht Mhuinntire Parthalóin, now called Tallaght.

Let us take up another current handbook of popular instruction, the volume entitled "Prehistoric Britain," by Dr. Munro, in the Home University Library series. The date of writing is 1913; the same as the date of the Cambridge volume on Lincolnshire. Dr. Munro discusses a certain type of skulls found in various parts of England. "All of these," he says (p. 234), "are usually assigned to the Neolithic period (the later Stone Age), and represent the prevailing type of Englishman at the commencement of that period, and probably also in the latter part of the Palæolithic period (the Early Stone Age). The skulls mentioned may represent British men and women living thousands of years apart. They clearly belong to the same race, which, for lack of a better, we may name 'the river-bed race.' IT IS THE PREVAILING TYPE IN ENGLAND TO-DAY, and from the scanty evidence at our disposal we may presume that it *has been* the dominant form many thousands of years. . . . All trace of this race has disappeared in Switzerland, whereas in England, in spite of invasion of Saxon, Jute, Dane and Norman, it still thrives abundantly." And further

he says (p. 235): "According to Dr. Keith, Palæolithic blood is as rife in the British people of to-day as in those of the European continent—a conclusion," adds Dr. Munro, "which entirely meets with the present writer's views."

Thus we see that, according to two eminent British authorities, the race which inhabited Britain in the Early Stone Age is still the prevalent type in that island, and has not been displaced by Celt or Roman or Anglo-Saxon.

[It is, however, due to Dr. Sympson to say that a year earlier, in 1912, Dr. Munro, as he himself observes, thought it "possible that (at the close of the Early Stone Age) the Palæolithic people would shrink back to Europe and thus, for a time, leave a gap in the continuity of human life in Britain" (p. 236); and this, he says, was formerly the general idea.]

The second population of Britain, "the people of the Later Stone Age," says Dr. Sympson, "are believed to have been largely of Iberian stock—people, that is, from south-western Europe."

Before the discovery of "the law of gravity" and of the operation of atmospheric pressure, the old-fashioned scientists used to explain the rising of water in a pump by saying that "Nature abhors a vacuum." There is no doubt that when the human mind becomes interested in any department of knowledge and inquiry, it abhors a vacuum, and this very laudable abhorrence often leaves the mind a victim to almost any plausible and positive effort to fill the vacuum. That is why such a very

precise and particular term as Iberian comes so handy and brings so much satisfaction. Ethnologists, however, are agreed that in prehistoric times, before the Celts had invaded south-western Europe, there were already at least two very distinct races in that region, and that both are still well represented in it. To speak of them as one race, and to call that race Iberian, or to use the term "Iberian" without distinguishing between them, is merely filling the vacuum. Rhys has succeeded in popularising the term "Iberian" as a name for the population which occupied Britain and Ireland before the first coming of the Celts, and he has identified the Picts with this Iberian stock. Politics, as well as war, is eager to turn to account the services of science. There is, perhaps, no more acute and more highly educated mind in England of to-day than that of Mr. Arthur Balfour. I wish to remark here that I am only dealing with certain prevalent views about ancient history, and that I am not arguing politically one way or the other. But Mr. Balfour, in a written document supporting certain political views of his with regard to the political claims of a certain proportion of the Irish people, gave it as a reason for rejecting the claims in question, that the people of Ireland were in a large degree of the Iberian race, descendants of the primitive inhabitants during the Later Stone Age. As for any political controversy on that point, I have nothing at all to say. I should prefer to hear it discussed between Mr. Balfour and the Portuguese ambassador to London. I do confess that

I am very curious to know what political conclusion Mr. Balfour would derive from the scientific conclusion of Dr. Keith and Dr. Munro, that the prevailing type in the English population of to-day represents something still more primitive than Sir John Rhys's Iberians, and is the survival of that "river-bed race" who, in the words of Dr. Munro, were "miserable shell-eaters."

In Sir John Rhys's theory, the Iberians of the Later Stone Age are succeeded by the Goidels or Gaels, of Celtic origin, who introduced the Bronze Age in Britain and also in Ireland. Many centuries after these came the Brythons, who introduced the Iron Age, and drove the Gaels out of the greater part of England. Dr. Sympson says that the Brythons of that invasion drove the Gaels out of Wales also, but for this he has no warrant from Sir John Rhys. According to Rhys, the Gaels continued to occupy the more westerly parts of the island, even after the Roman occupation.

Rhys's theory is still more elaborate. The three divisions of Gaul with which Cæsar begins the account of his Gallic war are familiar to students of Latin. Rhys equates his Neolithic Iberians of Britain and Ireland with the Iberian element in Aquitanian Gaul and Spain, his Bronze-Age Goidels or Gaels with the Celtae of Cæsar's Gallia Celtica, and his Iron-Age Brythons of England with the Belgae of Cæsar's Gallia Belgica. He goes still farther with this process of equation. Finding that the consonant Q, where it occurs in the most

ancient forms of the Irish language, is replaced by P in the corresponding forms of the British or ancient Welsh language, he divides the Celts into two linguistic groups which he labels the Q-Celts and the P-Celts, and this division he makes to correspond to the other classification into Celtae and Belgae. In this way, he produces a most interesting and symmetrical set of equations showing the successive stages of population-change in Britain.

First, there are the people of the Early Stone Age, not named.

Secondly, the people of the Later Stone Age, Iberians.

Thirdly, the people of the Bronze Age, Goidels or Gaels, or Celtae, or Q-Celts.

Fourthly, the people of the Iron Age, Brythons or Britons, or Belgae, or P-Celts.

For the present, let us pass away from the Iberians, and consider the theory as it concerns the Celtic migrations to Britain and Ireland. The earliest known habitat of the Celts is the region to the north of the Alps. The earliest definitely known migration of the Celts is their southward movement into Northern Italy. For this migration no earlier date than 600 B.C. is assigned.

The chief authority on the Bronze Age in Ireland belongs to the late Mr. George Coffey. In his book on the subject, "The Bronze Age in Ireland," he hesitates to date the close of the Stone Age and the introduction of the Copper Period as far back as 2500 B.C., which is the approximate date estimated

by Montelius. He puts the close of the Copper Period between 2000 and 1800 B.C. and the first period of the true Bronze Age between 1800 and 1500 B.C. Now, according to the theory prevalent in Britain, the first Celtic invaders introduced the Bronze Age, and these were the Gaels or Goidels. If we accept this view and combine it with the best archæological authority, we shall conclude that the Celts reached Ireland at least 1,200 years before they are known to have entered Italy—that they pushed out to a distant island in the ocean more than a millennium before they occupied the fertile and attractive plains which lay on their very borders.

But, it may be objected, is it not possible that the Celts of the Bronze Age had settled far away from the Alps, on the coasts of north-western Europe. Possible, perhaps, but what is the value of mere possibilities? We have seen it stated, and the Cambridge handbook is only a specimen of many publications that accept the view, stated most definitely that the Gaelic branch of the Celts introduced the Bronze Age to Britain and Ireland. Surely something more than a mere possibility, some shade or degree of probability should appear in support of teaching so positive.

Now let us suppose that the dominant Bronze Age population of Britain and Ireland were Celts, as we are instructed to believe. Let us see what would follow from this position. It would follow, beyond question, that the peculiar art and works of the Bronze Age in Britain and Ireland would be

mainly connected with the art and works of the Bronze Age in those parts of Europe which were likewise inhabited by Celts, rather than with other parts of the Continent. I cannot find that any such connection has been established or is believed in by archæologists.

The Brythons, we are told, were Belgic invaders who introduced the Iron Age. Not the faintest probability has been brought forward to establish this very precise and positive doctrine. Coffey places the close of the Bronze Age in Ireland and the coming of iron into general use at about 350 B.C. It is admitted that the Celts of central Europe were in possession of iron about four centuries earlier. This affords a most cogent argument that, during the intervening four centuries, there was no such social and industrial continuity between central Europe and these islands as must undoubtedly have been if both regions and the intervening parts of the Continent had been occupied by Celtic populations.

Again, if the Brythons or Belgic Celts, armed with iron, were able to cross the channel and displace the western Celts in Britain, it would surely have been much easier for them to cross the Marne and the Seine and displace the western Celts in Gaul. The theory seems to presuppose that an invasion was necessary to bring the Iron Age into Britain, but the same theory would have it that the Iron Age found its way into Ireland without any invasion, for it leaves the Bronze Age Goidels of Ireland to learn the use of iron in some more

pleasant way than by meeting iron-headed spears in the hands of Belgic conquerors.

It is certain that after the withdrawal of the Roman legions from Britain and after the Anglo-Saxon invasions, there were Gaelic populations in various parts of western Britain, in Argyllshire, North and South Wales, and the Cornish peninsula. Rhys supposed these to be the remnants of the Gaelic population which, in his view, had occupied all England during the Bronze Age. There is sufficient evidence to show that they were fresh settlements made by the Irish of Ireland during and after the collapse of the Roman power in Britain.

The "P and Q" element in the theory is equally unsound. It is certain that, where the Irish Celts retained the consonant Q in their language, the British Celts replaced it by P. But no such distinction has been shown to have existed between the language of the western Celts and the language of the Belgic Celts on the Continent. Such phonetic changes as the substitution of P for Q spread in an almost mysterious way through languages. Their spread may be arrested by a geographical barrier so considerable as the Irish Sea, but it was not at all likely to have been brought to a stand by the waters of the Seine and Marne. Nor can a phonetic change of the kind be taken as necessarily corresponding to any racial or political boundaries. In all the western dialects of Latin which grew into the Romance languages, the initial W of Germanic words was changed into GW, and

this identical change also took place in the Welsh language, but not in Irish. It took place in Spanish, yet that does not appear to prove that the Welsh are more near akin to the Spaniards than they are to the Irish, nor, if history happened to be silent, would it prove that Britain after the Roman occupation was peopled by a Spanish invasion which did not extend to Ireland.

There is one serious argument which has been adduced in support of the view that Britain was in Celtic occupation during the Bronze Age. The existence of the word *kassiteros*, meaning "tin," is traced in the Greek language as far back as about 900 B.C. There seems very good reason for thinking that *kassiteros* was a Celtic word adopted into Greek. From this it is argued that the metal itself came from the Celts to the Greeks, which seems reasonable enough. It is further argued that the Celts must accordingly have been in possession of the country which produced the metal, and that this country was Britain. The conclusion is that the Celts were in occupation of Britain earlier than 900 B.C. It seems to me, however, that the fact, granting it to be a fact, that the metal tin reached the Greeks bearing a Celtic name is by no means proof that it came from a country inhabited at the time by Celts. If you visit the Zoological Gardens in the Phœnix Park, you will be invited, before you reach the entrance, to purchase for the delectation of the monkeys a certain vegetable product, the name of which, upon inquiry, you will learn to be "pea-nuts." No one will be rash enough to deny

that "pea-nuts" is an English word. I have not the least idea where pea-nuts grow, but I am quite certain that the fact of their being named "pea-nuts" is no proof that they grow in England or in any English-speaking country. It is very good proof, however, if proof were needed, that the trade in pea-nuts has passed through the hands of English-speaking people. If *kassiteros* is a Celtic word, as I think it very probably is, it proves no more than that, when the Greeks learned this Celtic name for tin, the trade in tin passed towards them through the hands of a Celtic-speaking people. If it was British tin, which again is not improbable, I suggest that it came to Greece by an overland route through the Celtic region in Mid-Europe, probably along the Rhine and the Danube or to the head of the Adriatic. As a matter of fact, the Greek writer Poseidonios states that in his time British tin reached the Mediterranean by an overland route. "It is brought," he says, "on horses through the interior of the Celtic country to the people of Massilia and to the city called Narbon."

There is, then, no evidence from archæology, history, or language, sufficient to establish even a moderate degree of probability for the theory of a Celtic occupation of Ireland or Britain during the Bronze Age.

On the other hand, taking Coffey's approximate date of 350 B.C. as the beginning of the period of the general use of iron in Ireland, we shall, I think, find sufficient evidence to warrant the belief that the Celts reached Britain and Ireland about that

time, and not earlier, at all events not considerably earlier than that time.

Why not earlier? I think we have conclusive grounds for believing that the Celtic migrations to Ireland cannot have begun very much, if at all, sooner than the fourth century B.C. Before stating these grounds, let us ask is there any discoverable reason for supposing that the Gaels inhabited Ireland from a time many centuries farther back. I think it possible that those who in modern times have entertained this view have been influenced by the dates assigned to the Gaelic immigration by Irish writers like the Four Masters and Keating. These dates may be taken to correspond closely enough with the estimates of archæological authorities for the commencement of the insular Bronze Age, and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, it might be imagined that they were founded on some basis of tradition.

It is not the habit of popular tradition to encumber itself with chronology. There is no known instance of ancient reckoning in years and periods of years that is not based on some era, on the accepted date of some real or supposed event or events. Nowhere in Irish tradition has any trace been found of the existence of a native system of chronology before the introduction of Christian learning. In a paper published in the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy (July, 1910), I have shown how the extant written chronology of the Irish Invasions was first originated. The method was not unlike Sir John Rhys's series of equations.

The Irish historian found in Latin histories a set of definite epochs by which antiquity was divided: the beginning of the Assyrian empire, the beginning of the Median empire, the beginning of the Persian empire, the usurpation of the Magi in Persia, and the beginning of Alexander's empire. The chronology of the Irish Invasions was settled by the easy process of making each invasion coincide exactly in time with each of these epochs. It is evident that no traditional value can be attached to a chronological system of this kind.

But, it may be objected, the very remoteness of the time assigned to the Gaelic invasion by Irish historians may reflect the popular belief in its remoteness. If that be so, then the earlier the historian is the more near he is to the popular tradition. In the paper just cited, I have shown that, in the earliest known version of this chronology of the Invasions, the Gaelic migration to Ireland coincides with the date of Alexander's empire, 331 B.C. That is not very far from the date assigned by Coffey for the end of the Bronze Age in Ireland, about 350 B.C. For my own part, I attach no traditional value to this coincidence, but if it pleases anyone to insist that Irish prehistoric chronology has a traditional value, then it must be conceded that tradition, as far as it is valid, is altogether favourable to the view that the Gaelic occupation of Ireland belongs to the end, and not to the beginning, of the Bronze Age.

The migratory movements of the Celts on the Continent have a bearing which cannot be ignored on the time of the Celtic migrations to Britain and

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Ireland. So far as I am aware, no modern investigator has suggested that the Celts were not already in the Iron Age at the time of their expansion into Italy and Spain. Why then should it be imagined, in the absence of any positive indication to the purpose, that they occupied these islands more than a thousand years earlier?

If I am not mistaken, the archæological evidence is fairly decisive on the point. Archæologists are agreed in dividing the Celtic Iron Age into two main periods, the Early Celtic or Hallstatt period, and the Late Celtic or La Tène period, also called the Marnian period. Each of these periods is taken to consist roundly of about four centuries, and the two periods on the Continent together correspond roughly to the last eight or nine centuries before the Christian Era. The Late Celtic period is abundantly represented in the antiquities of Great Britain and Ireland, but the objects that have been found in either country belonging to the Early Celtic Period are extremely rare. On this head Coffey writes as follows ("Bronze Age in Ireland," page 5):

"It must be remembered that the Continental Hallstatt period is not at present well represented in Great Britain and Ireland, and though, under Hallstatt influence, certain Continental Iron-Age types such as bronze caldrons, trumpets, round shields, etc., found their way into Ireland, we cannot as yet definitely separate this period from the end of the Bronze Age."

In fact, "sporadic finds" are all that represent

the Early Celtic period in Ireland, in Britain, and even in the neighbouring regions of the Continent. It will not be questioned that during the Hallstatt period there was quite sufficient intercourse of trade between the islands and the Continent to explain these sporadic finds as importations.

The main fact is that, so far as archæological research has ascertained, the Early Celtic period of the Iron Age is substantially absent from Ireland and Britain, whereas the Late Celtic period is abundantly represented. The Bronze Age in Ireland comes down to about 350 B.C., and its Continental affinities are not specially or notably Celtic. The Bronze Age is succeeded in both Britain and Ireland by the Late Celtic period of the Iron Age. The inference, to my mind, is obvious, that the Celts did not reach either Britain or Ireland until the Late Celtic period, *i.e.*, until the fourth or fifth century B.C. This conclusion agrees well with all that is known of the migratory movements of the Celts on the Continent.

Let us now revert to the Belgic migrations and consider their bearing on the matter of the Celtic colonisation of Ireland. The Belgae, we have seen, were a Celto-Germanic group which, according to Cæsar and Tacitus, occupied the lands stretching from the Rhine to the Seine and Marne, and expelled from that region the Celtae proper. There is no indication in what Cæsar says that in his time this movement was one of remote antiquity. In fact, it is perfectly clear that it was a movement by no means exhausted but still in active progress

when he took command of the Roman armies in Gaul. The attempted migration of the Helvetii in the first year of his command, B.C. 58, was a part of this movement. A little later, Cæsar had to repel similar attempts of the Usipetes and the Tencteri to cross the middle Rhine and settle in Gaul; and these, according to Dio, were two Celtic peoples. Still later, in the time of Augustus, the Ubii migrated from the eastern to the western side of the Rhine. From all this it is clear that the Belgic migration was a continuous movement and that its force was far from being spent at the time of the Roman conquest of the country west of the Rhine. Cæsar indicates that there were powerful Belgic settlements west of the Rhine during the great wandering movement of the Cimbri and the Teutones, *i.e.*, about half a century before he began his Gallic campaigns. There is nothing, however, to show that these settlements were of earlier date than the second century B.C., and I have seen no reason for thinking that they could have been much earlier.

We now come to the question of the Belgic invasion of Britain and its probable date. In Rhys's theory, which is still accepted in England, the Belgic invaders were the first to establish the Iron Age in Britain. I claim to have shown good grounds for believing that there was no Celtic occupation of Britain before the Iron Age. I have already suggested that, if this Celto-Germanic movement was brought to a standstill on the banks of the Marne, it was not likely to have succeeded in over-running all England at the commencement of the Iron Age

in England. It will be seen that the Celto-Germanic migrations extended not merely to Britain but also to Ireland, and I suggest that if these Celto-German Belgae had been the first people to come over armed with iron, they would have made an easy conquest of Ireland as well as of England.

Let us look at the actual evidence of the Belgic conquest of England. The sole historical witness on the point is Julius Cæsar, and this is his testimony:

"The interior of Britain is inhabited by those who say that, according to tradition they are natives of the island; the maritime part by those who had crossed over from Belgium [meaning Belgic Gaul] for the sake of plunder, nearly all of whom are called by the same names of states as the states from which they originated and came thither, and having made war they settled permanently there and began to till the land."

From this it is clear that Cæsar was informed of two populations in Britain, one which was more ancient and claimed to be native, another which resulted from comparatively recent invasion. The older population he assigned to the interior, the more recent to the seaboard. What did Cæsar mean by the seaboard, the maritime part? Sir John Rhys has no difficulty in supposing that Cæsar did not mean the whole seaboard of Britain or if he did mean it that he was not fully informed, for according to Rhys's theory, the older population, which he supposed to be Gaelic, continued to inhabit the western seaboard of England and Wales. I also agree that, whatever Cæsar may have understood,

his statement about the maritime part must be taken in a restricted sense, for no one believes that the Celtic occupation in Cæsar's time extended to the seaboard of the northern parts of the island. I agree also with the view that the traditional natives of whom Cæsar speaks probably included the earlier Celtic colonists, whose settlements dated, according to my argument, from the fourth century B.C., about three centuries before Cæsar's time. The more recent maritime settlements, in that case, would have been very recent in his time, and I think that his statement leads us to that conclusion. These later settlers on the seaboard, he tells us, are known collectively by the same names as the states on the Continent from which they originated. Now this is a statement about a fact likely to be within Cæsar's personal knowledge. He was certainly well acquainted with the names of the states of Belgic Gaul, and there is no reason why he should have said that populations retaining the same names existed in his time on the British coast if he did not know it to be a fact. His testimony on this point, touching a matter within the scope of his personal observation, is of higher evidential value than any other part of the statement quoted. Cæsar does not himself name these states, but in the two following centuries the names of the various states of Britain are given by Ptolemy and other writers, and when we compare these names with those of the states of Belgic Gaul, we find that they coincide only in three instances. These are the Parisii on the foreland north of the Humber, the Atrebatii in the district of

Berkshire, and the Belgae, eastward from these to the Bristol Channel. There are some eighteen other states enumerated in Britain, so that the coincidence of names amounts to only one in seven, a proportion which by no means corresponds to Cæsar's words, *fere omnes*, "nearly all." Except for the Parisii, who occupied the promontory north of the Humber, the states bearing names also found in Belgic Gaul are located in southern England, south of the Thames and the Bristol Channel. One of these, and the most extensive, bears the general name Belgae, which certainly does not suggest that the remainder of the population was also Belgic. Now the *fere omnes*, "nearly all," in Cæsar's statement cannot refer to such a small minority of the states of Britain. Therefore, either Cæsar was grossly in error, in which case there is not much to be built on his whole statement, or, if he stated the truth, which is much more likely, then there were Belgic settlements on the British seaboard in his time which had lost their identity and passed into insignificance a century later. This I take to be true, for it will be seen that there were also Belgic settlements on the Irish coast after Cæsar's time and that as states they had disappeared a few centuries later. It is indeed quite possible that the Belgae so named, in southern England, consisted of a collection of colonies from various states of Belgic Gaul, whose names were preserved in Cæsar's time, but not one of which was sufficiently populous or otherwise considerable to be worth naming by later writers. There may have been similar Belgic colonies on other parts of the

southern and eastern seaboard of Britain, none of them considerable enough to be reckoned as a state. At all events, I submit that Cæsar's statement, far from justifying the assumption of a Belgic conquest on a grand scale, comprising the greater part of Celtic Britain, is rather contrary to that assumption; also, that it cannot reasonably be taken to refer to settlements made in Britain at the close of the Bronze Age three or four centuries before Cæsar's time.

I have referred to the existence at one time of Celto-Germanic settlements on the coast of Ireland. The authority on the point is Ptolemy the geographer, who flourished about A.D. 150. In the south-eastern angle of Ireland, the region of Wexford, he places a population named Brigantes. There was a very extensive state of this name in the north of Roman Britain. Its territory extended across the country from the North Sea to the Irish Sea. Whether the Brigantes were or were not Belgic colonists in Britain and Ireland, I find no means to determine. North of the Brigantes, on the Leinster coast, Ptolemy locates the Manapii. It can hardly be doubted that these were a Belgic people, a branch of the Menapii,[1] whose territory on the Continent lay in parts of the countries now called Belgium and Holland. North of the Manapii on the Leinster coast, Ptolemy places the Cauci. The topography of Ireland from the time of Saint Patrick onward is very copious and minute, but no trace has been discovered in it of these three peoples in

[1] The syllables *en* and *an* are found interchangeable in many Celtic words, perhaps varying according to dialect.

the location ascribed to them by Ptolemy. It seems to me possible that the Manapii may be represented in later times by a scattered people called the Monaigh or Manaigh. Some of these dwelt in eastern Ulster, near Belfast. Another branch of them dwelt in the west of Ulster, and their name is preserved in that of the county Fermanagh. It is interesting to note that the Irish genealogists derive the origin of both from Leinster. The only trace known to me in Irish tradition of a people similarly named on the south-eastern seaboard is found in the name of Forgall Monach, the father of Emer who was wife of Cú Chulainn. Who were the Cauci? Their name, in the Germanic form Chauci, was that of a people of the German seaboard bordering on the North Sea, who are described in Smith's *Ancient Geography* as "skilful navigators and much addicted to piracy." Tacitus praises them for their love of justice and says that, though ready for war, they do not provoke war. It must be remembered, however, that Tacitus was an extreme "pro-German." Elsewhere, he tells of incursions made by them against neighbouring peoples. We find, then, two peoples, the Menapii and the Chauci, on the Belgic and German shores of the North Sea, and also on the Leinster shores of the Irish Sea; and this shows that in Ireland as well as in Britain there were Celto-Germanic settlements about the beginning of the Christian era.

Cæsar is the earliest known writer to give the name Brittania to the island of Britain and the name Brittani to its people. In earlier writings the

name of the island is Albion. In Cæsar's term Brittani, there seems to be a confusion of two existing names, one Brittani, the name of a small local population, the other Pretani which is recognised to be a British and probably Gaulish equivalent of the Irish name for the Picts, Cruithin, more anciently Qreteni. Cæsar fixed the name Brittani in Latin usage, but the form Pretanoi continued after his time to be used by Greek writers. Polybius and Ptolemy apply the adjective Pretanic to the two islands, and a still later geographical tract in Greek says, " the Pretanic islands are two in number one called Albion and the other Ierne." The Pretanic islands means the Pictish islands, and this name for them must have been taken from the Gauls. It points to a time before the Celtic occupation, when the Pretani or Picts were still regarded as the principal people of both islands. Here we have another indication of the relatively late period of the Celtic occupation. Cæsar learned that the natives of Britain had some curious marital customs which he did not observe among the Gauls, including the Belgae, on the Continent. A later writer, Solinus, in whose time the customs of the Britons were more intimately known to the Romans, ascribes a similar custom, not to the Britons but to the inhabitants of the Hebrides. Both accounts are based on a well-established fact, recorded also in Irish writings, the custom of matriarchy which was peculiar to the Picts. Cæsar's statement is readily explained, if we understand that the Gauls, from whom his information was likely to have been de-

rived, still spoke of Britain and Ireland as the Pictish islands, and regarded this social custom, which was foreign to them, as a Pictish custom. In the time of Solinus, the Romans knew that the Picts were limited to the northern parts of Britain, and the story is accordingly told of the people of the Hebrides. If a custom peculiar to the Picts was spoken of in Cæsar's time as common to the inhabitants of Britain, and if Britain and Ireland were then still regarded in Gaul as Pictish islands, I suggest that this was because the Celts of Gaul did not look upon the two islands as having been mainly occupied from any remote period by a people akin to themselves.

The conclusions which I wish to draw in this lecture are: that neither Britain nor Ireland was colonised by the Celts until the Late Celtic period, corresponding to the period which followed the Bronze Age in these countries; that the Belgic or Celto-Germanic settlements were of still later date, and extended to Ireland as well as Britain; that the Belgic settlements in England were not so widespread as they are represented in modern British writers; and that the distinction between the ancient Gaels and Britons does not correspond to the distinction between the Celtae and Belgae of Gaul in Cæsar's time.

III. THE PRE-CELTIC INHABITANTS OF IRELAND

IN the second lecture, I remarked how the name Iberians has been adopted to fill a vacuum as regards the naming of the population which occupied Great Britain and Ireland before the Celtic immigration. This kind of naming is unscientific and misleading. It implies that the ancient population thus artificially named can be identified as a branch of the population which actually bore that name in Greek and Latin literature. From this implied identification other equally unwarranted assumptions are likely to follow. Rhys expended a vast amount of study, ingenuity, and argument in the effort to show that very definite traces of a language akin to modern Basque survived in ancient Ireland and Scotland. On this point it may be remarked that we do not even know that the Basque population was originally Iberian. Ethnologists are agreed that, apart altogether from the Celtic migrations, there must have been a mixture of very distinct races in south-western Europe in prehistoric times. If there was a mixture of races, there was also no doubt more than one language, and if the Basque language has been able to survive the conquests of Celt and Roman and Goth, and last until our own time it may also well have survived the

extinction of other languages in south western Europe.

So far as the Iberian theory is not mere vacuum-filling, it appears to rest on a single passage of Tacitus. He is describing the Silures, a British people whose territory was in the south of Wales, and who offered a very fierce resistance to the Romans. "The swarthy complexion of the Silures," he says, "the prevalence of curly hair among them, and their position over against Spain, argue that the ancient Iberians must have crossed over [from Spain] and occupied their territory." We have often heard the occurrence of similar physical traits in the west of Ireland ascribed to a more recent Spanish mixture. It all amounts to this, which Irish tradition bears out, and which nobody questions, that these western isles contain descendants of an ancient dark-complexioned population, probably already of mixed race, which existed in western Europe before the arrival of the fair-complexioned people, whose distinctive features appear by all indications to have originated in the lands forming the basin of the Baltic Sea.

If I am right in suggesting that the Greeks adopted from the Gauls the name Pretanic Islands, as a joint name for Britain and Ireland, it follows that the Gauls themselves supposed the chief population of both islands, before the Celtic occupation, to have been the Pretani, *i.e.*, the Picts. During the early historical period, the Picts are chiefly known as the people of the northern mainland of Scotland, north of the Grampian mountains. The Venerable Bede

speaks of their language as still existing in his time, the early part of the eighth century, and as being distinct from the Irish and British languages.

We have abundant and clear evidence that the Picts were at one time widely spread throughout Ireland. Early Irish writings recognise the existence, in their own time, of sections of the population known to be Pictish. The Picts were especially numerous in Ulster. They are described as a subject population, spread over the whole of ancient Oriel, which at that time comprised the counties of Armagh, Monaghan, Tyrone and the greater part of Derry and Fermanagh. There was also a large Pictish element in Connacht, and there were smaller groups, traditionally known to be Pictish, in Munster, Meath, and various parts of Leinster. In Ulster, the ruling or dominant population of a large belt of territory, extending from Carlingford Loch to the mouth of the Bann, is named in the Annals both by the Latin name Picti, and its Irish equivalent Cruithni or Cruithin, which is the Irish form corresponding to Pretani. They continue to be so named until the eighth century, when apparently their Pictish identity ceased to find favour among themselves. It may be observed, however, that, while some proper names which contain non-Gaelic elements survived in ancient Ireland, no trace has been discovered of any language other than Gaelic continuing to be spoken in any part of Ireland within the traditional memory of the people. From this it will appear that the Gaelic language had become universal throughout Ireland some centuries before

Irish history and traditions began to be written. The earliest writing of Irish history still extant belongs to the closing years of the sixth century.

In the case of the Picts, we find an interesting example of the method that recommended itself to the learned folk of ancient Ireland when they desired to fill the vacuum. In the Irish "Nennius," the Picts are said to have come of the stock of the Geloni, a people of Scythia mentioned by Herodotus. The explanation of this curious piece of history is found in a passage of Virgil, in which he speaks of the *picti Geloni*, i.e., the painted Geloni. They were supposed to dye their skin with some colouring stuff. In one of the versions of the wanderings of the Gaels before they reached Ireland, instead of sailing the Mediterranean they marched from Scythia across Europe. On their way they fraternised with a people called the Agathyrsi, who dwelt in Thrace. They made a compact with these people, with the result that later on a body of the Agathyrsi, having taken the name of Picts, followed in the track of the Gaels and came to Ireland. On their way they passed through a part of Gaul, where some of them remained, and were afterwards known as Pictavi. From these is named Poitou in France. Virgil is at the back of this story also. In a verse of the Æneid, he speaks of the *picti Agathyrsi*, "the painted Agathyrsi."

From these instances, we can see how closely Virgil was read in the ancient Irish schools. We can also see from what materials our ancient scholars could weave their legends of antiquity. And later on we

shall see how similar materials and a similar process enabled the Latin scholars of ancient Ireland to construct their accounts—for they have more than one account—of the origin and early wanderings of the Gaelic people.

Another considerable element of the ancient population was the Iverni, as they were called by Ptolemy in the second century. Ptolemy locates them in the middle of southern Ireland. The Irish form of their name in the time of our most ancient writings was 'Erainn, more familiar in later usage in the accusative form 'Erna. They have been sometimes called Erneans in English. In the older heroic literature, the Iverni or 'Erainn are the chief people of Munster. In an important early tract, which gives the names and distribution of the principal subject communities throughout Ireland, the Sen-Erainn are placed in the district of Luachair, *i.e.*, in the north of Kerry and the adjoining parts of the counties of Limerick and Cork. The peoples enumerated in this tract are regarded as being not of Gaelic origin. Sen-Erainn means the old or original Iverni, and the term is used to distinguish them from others also called Erainn, who were of free status and are attached by the genealogists to the Gaelic stock. My opinion is that the dominant element in every part of Ireland during the historical period, including the dynastic families and higher nobility, was Celtic. Otherwise, if we suppose that large communities of pre-Celtic inhabitants continued to exist under rulers and nobles of their own stock down to medieval times, the universality of

the Gaelic language as far back as tradition reaches would be hard to account for. I suppose that, when a Celtic dynasty and nobility became established over a non-Celtic commonalty, the old name of the community became attached to them all. So we find that Giraldus calls the nobles who invaded Ireland in his time Angli, giving them the name of the subject people over whom they had ruled in England, though they had been barely a century in England and some of them not nearly so long. I think the same is probably true of the free and dominant Picts in the north-east, *i.e.*, that they consisted of a common population of Pictish stock ruled by kings and nobles of Celtic origin.

Not only in Munster but also in Connacht, Meath and Ulster, our ancient genealogists recognise the existence of Ivernian communities. Rhys put forward the view that the Iverni were only a southern division of the Picts, but this view cannot well be reconciled with Irish tradition, which seems always to distinguish between Picts and Iverni, and recognises Picts in southern Ireland and Iverni in northern Ireland. For example, in county Antrim, Dál Riada, the north-eastern portion, was Ivernian, and the rest of the county for the most part was Pictish. We are on safer ground in regarding the Picts and the Iverni as two fairly distinct peoples.

From the Iverni the whole island took the names by which it was known to the ancient Irish, the Britons, the Greeks, the Romans, and therefore no doubt to the Celts in the neighbouring parts of the Continent. But we have seen that the original

Iverni, in Irish tradition, were a remnant of the pre-Celtic population. Ireland therefore was named by the Celts, as Britain and Ireland were jointly named, from an older population which the invading Celts found in possession. The Romans changed Iverni into Hiberni, through a process known as popular etymology. Hiberni suggested to them the Latin word meaning "wintry." Though Ireland was known to some Latin writers to be by no means a wintry country, but quite the contrary, this verbal resemblance naturally caught the imagination, and one Latin poet actually speaks of "glacialis Ierne," ice-cold Ireland.

The Irish and Welsh names of Ireland are not directly taken from the name of the Iverni, but evidently from an older form which must have been Ivéri. Both the Irish name *'Eire* (formerly 'Eriu) and the Welsh *Iwerddon* go back to an older name *Iverio*, and this older name is actually found in the writings of Saint Patrick in the slightly disguised Latin form *Hiberio*. The Irish genealogies corroborate this view that the name *Iverni* is itself a derivative from an older name *Iveri*. A common feature in genealogical lore is the tracing of a people's descent from an ancestor of the same name. It is found in the Bible, in the genealogies of the Arabs, in the legends of the Greeks, and in our own legends, for example, when the Gaels are said to have taken their name from an ancestor named Gaedheal Glas. In like manner all the pedigrees of the Erainn or Iverni in the Irish genealogies are traced to an ancestor named *Iar*.

Iar is a word of two syllables, and represents an older form Iveros. From this and from the Irish and Welsh names of Ireland, I infer that the people called Iverni were at a still earlier period called Iveri. The change in the name of a people from a simple to a derivative form is of very common occurrence. Thus, instead of Angles, people now say the English, instead of Scots, the Scotch; in Irish, the names for the English and the Welsh have undergone a similar change; and so with numerous other names in many countries and languages.

Rhys derives the old Celtic name of Ireland, Iverio, from a word cognate with the Greek *piaira*, meaning "fat," and understands Iverio to mean the fat, *i.e.*, the fertile country. This explanation, however, will not hold good if, as I think, the name Iverio means the country of the Iveri, unless we suppose the name Iveri to be Celtic and to mean "the fat people!" But we have seen that, in Irish tradition, the original Iverni were a pre-Celtic people, and we are under no necessity to discover a Celtic origin for their name.

For my part, granted that this people bore the name Iveri, changed afterwards into the adjectival form Iverni, I see no serious difficulty in supposing that this name was a local variant of Iberi, the name by which the people of Spain were known to the ancient Greeks and Romans.

Authorities on Irish archæology are agreed that the Early Stone Age is not exemplified in the most ancient remains of human occupation that have been discovered in Ireland. The explanation for this is

supplied by the geologists. Some thousands of years ago, the conditions of perpetual snow and ice that at present prevail in the Arctic regions extended much farther into the temperate zones. The northern parts of Europe were covered with perpetual ice. Ireland lay entirely within this glacial zone. The southern limit of the ice ran through the south of England and eastward across the Continent. The time during which this southward extension of ice lasted is called the Glacial Period. Already before that time, Europe was inhabited by man, and the Early Stone Age or Palæolithic Age is held to have preceded the Glacial Period.

The condition of Ireland during that period was like the present condition of Greenland, under a heavy covering of ice formed by the accumulation of snow. By its own weight the ice kept moving from the mountains into the valleys and plains, and from the higher land level into the surrounding seas. Under its moving action, the solid rock-formation of the mountains was ground down and rounded off and scooped into hollows, and great sheets and ridges of stones, gravel, sand and boulder-clay were accumulated on the slopes and low grounds. It is evident that any traces of human life and habitation that may have existed before this process were not likely to be found after it.

The consequence is that the earliest traceable population of Ireland was Neolithic, *i.e.*, belonged to the Late Stone Age. By the Stone Age is meant that time in which the use of metals was still unknown, and in which the most durable material of

implements used by men was stone. Needless to say, they also used wood, bone, and any other material that came to hand. The Late Stone Age is distinguished from the Early Stone Age by the use of polished and finely shaped stone implements.

In England, according to eminent authorities already quoted, the descendants of Palæolithic Man survived and are still the prevalent type. In Ireland, they did not survive, and whatever Palæolithic blood is in our veins to-day is due to immigration. Regarding the Neolithic population of Ireland, whatever is to be said belongs rather to archæology than to history. In Britain, we are told, the Neolithic population consisted of at least three distinct races, one which had remained there from Palæolithic times, and two new races, or rather a mixture of two races, which came in from the Continent. One sees how futile it is to attempt to fix upon such a population a name like Iberian. It is assuming a knowledge which does not belong to us.

The Late Stone Age was followed by the Bronze Age, but between the two came a transitional period now generally recognised, in which copper replaced stone as the most durable material of manufacture. This Copper Period is well exemplified in Ireland. Bronze, the distinctive material of the Bronze Age, was made by adding a small proportion of tin to copper, producing a metal very much superior to pure copper for the manufacture of tools and weapons. So far as I have been able to learn, the presence of tin in quantities that could be worked is unknown in Ireland. There seems to have been

no scarcity of bronze, and from this I conclude that during the Bronze Age, Ireland had an import trade in tin, and probably therefore an export trade in copper or some other product. This is the earliest evidence of Irish commerce. Bronze cannot have been the material of ordinary industry, nor, unless the inhabitants were very unwarlike, can bronze have been the material of ordinary weapons of war. It is a very durable material, almost unaffected by the action of the elements during centuries. Numerous as the finds of bronze tools and weapons have been in Ireland, they should have been immeasurably more numerous if tools and weapons of bronze had been in every man's hands throughout the Bronze Age, which, according to Coffey, lasted from about 1800 B.C. to about 350 B.C. In fact, Sir Robert Kane, in his work on "The Industrial Resources of Ireland," in a footnote regarding the once extensive copper mines of the Danes' Island on the Waterford coast, supplies an interesting proof of what otherwise we should reasonably expect to be true, that the ordinary working population of the Bronze Age continued to use the implements of the preceding Stone Age.[1] Weapons and tools of bronze must therefore have been in the hands chiefly of a more opulent class than the general population. Gold was also used for ornaments, and Ireland is noted for the abundance of its gold ornaments dating from the Bronze Age. Native Irish gold was worked from very remote times, but it is also certain that

[1] "In the abandoned workings, antique tools have been found, stone hammers and chisels and wooden shovels."

in the early Christian period gold was brought to Ireland by Oriental merchants in exchange for other products of the country. Sickles of bronze bear witness to the tillage of the soil for corn during this period. It will be seen that there was a mixture of various peoples in Ireland at the time. From this we might expect that there were various degrees of civilisation, and so the remains of Bronze Age sepulchres indicate. The simpler and ruder forms of these are found all over the country. The highly elaborate sepulchres of the region of the lower Boyne, its tributary the Blackwater, and the lower Liffey, are indicative of a relatively high civilisation in those parts, the ancient territory of Bregia. Along with these we may take into account an old Gaelic tradition. It tells that when the Gaels came to Ireland many of the fertile plains had still to be cleared of forest, but there was one plain, Magh n-Ealta, stretching northward from Dublin, which was called the Ancient Plain and was already clear of forest before they arrived. Its name is interpreted as meaning " the plain of the flocks of birds," by which we may understand that it was frequented by the various kinds of gregarious birds which we see in our own time hovering around the plough, rooks, jackdaws, starlings and seagulls. It is worth noting that towards the opposite border of the same region of Bregia there is another plain of the same name, still represented in the name of Moynalty village, about four miles north of Kells and on the Moynalty river, which is a tributary of the Meath Blackwater.

I shall here mention an additional indication that the Gaels were not in occupation of Ireland during the Bronze Age. In ancient Gaelic tradition, the great chambered tumuli of the Boyne are taken to be the tombs or the dwellings of an earlier race.

We pass on now to consider some of the evidence supplied by our ancient literature regarding the population which inhabited Ireland before the coming of the Gaels, that is, according to the conclusions I have already drawn, before the Iron Age. The Gaels occupied Ireland as a conquering and dominant people. During the early centuries of their occupation, whatever language or languages had been spoken in Ireland before them completely disappeared as languages, leaving no doubt some traces behind in the names of places, etc., and probably also influencing to some degree the Gaelic language itself. But for a long time there was nothing like a complete fusion of the old and the new population. The older population remained, not as a mere promiscuous swarm of subject folk, but preserving in a large measure its ancient organisation and subdivisions.* This state of things continued during the early centuries of Christianity in Ireland.

Most of the manuscript evidence concerning these ancient communities is still awaiting collection, publication, and study. Some of it is to be found here and there in the old genealogical tracts, which are still unpublished, and some in the annals. There is a good deal of very ancient material on the subject quoted in the introductory part of the great Book of Genealogies by Dubhaltach Mac Fir-Bhisigh. There

is one particular tract dealing specially with the names and topography of these ancient subject communities. It exists in a number of MSS., and has been printed by Craigie in the Revue Celtique from a single MS. of the Edinburgh collection. From internal evidence I think that this tract is of not later date than the eighth century. I mention these facts to show how much has still to be done before we can claim a near approach to full and accurate knowledge of the existing evidence.

There are, however, some larger divisions of the ancient population, spread over wide areas and comprising in each instance several of the smaller named groups; and about these larger divisions there is sufficient information to warrant the essaying of some account of them. Chief among these may be reckoned the Picts. The tract just mentioned shows that there were subject communities of the Picts around Cruachain, the seat of the Connacht kings, and all over Mid-Ulster, from Meath to Loch Foyle.

Along the lower part of the Shannon, in the counties of Galway, Tipperary and Limerick, there was an ancient population known as Fir Iboth, or by the adjectival name Ibdaig. These names contain the Irish equivalent of the name by which the western islands of Scotland were known to Greek and Latin writers of the first and second centuries of the Christian era, *i.e.*, Ebudae. The modern name Hebrides originated in a mistaken writing of this name, and it is curious that the most celebrated island of the group got its English name, "Iona," in the same

way. Ptolemy makes these islands belong to Ireland not to Britain. Solinus says the inhabitants in his time grow no crops and live on fish and milk. It is possible that an ancient branch of this population preserved their identity by forming, so to speak, a fisherman caste on the banks of the Shannon. There is evidence that something like the Hindu caste system, in so far as it is linked with the occupations of the people, existed among the descendants of the Pre-Celtic population in Ireland. One of these subject communities is known by the variant names Tuath Semon, Semonrige, Semrige, and Semaine. Each of these names contains the Irish word *seim*, meaning a rivet, and may be translated the Rivet-folk. This people dwelt in the Desi territory of Munster, where those copper-mines are found which were worked in the Bronze Age by miners using tools of stone and wood. Taking the facts together, it seems reasonable to infer that the Semonrige tribe were the descendants of the ancient copper-smiths of the district, and that they obtained their name from the commodity in which they paid their tribute to the dominant Celts, for the name is Celtic. It should be well noted here that these Irish metal-workers are presented to us in early Irish records as descendants of the pre-Gaelic population; whereas, as we have seen, the current theory in British archæology assumes that the occupation of working bronze was distinctive of the Gaels themselves and was introduced by them.

Another copper-producing district is that of Béarra in West Munster, bordering on Berehaven. Here in

ancient times dwelt another "rent-paying" community bearing the significant name of Ceardraighe, "the Smith Folk." There was also either a branch of this folk or another community of the same name situate around the ancient seat of the Munster kings, Teamhair Luachra, a suitable locality in which to find constant employment for a caste of workers in bronze.

According to the tract on the Rent-paying Communities, all over the parts of Munster which, in historical time, were regarded as being specifically Ivernian, including large districts in the present counties of Tipperary, Limerick, Cork and Kerry. there was distributed one of these subject communities which bore the name Tuath Cathbarr, *i.e.*, "the people of helmets." Since there is no record and no likelihood that this subject people were a fighting caste, as undoubtedly some of the subject-communities were in other parts of Ireland, we may infer that they got their name from being employed in the manufacture of battle-gear.

I come now to the most celebrated of all the pre-Celtic folks that inhabited Ireland, the Fir Bolg. In including these among the industrial castes of ancient Ireland, I claim the support of the oldest written traditions, which clearly tell that the Fir Bolg, or "Men of Bags," obtained that name from an industrial connection with leathern bags. The story of the origin of the name, as found in the Book of Invasions, Keating's History, etc., is no doubt well-known. They migrated, we are told, from Ireland to Greece (Greece in ancient Irish writings means the Eastern Empire). There, being outlanders, ac-

cording to the ideas of our forefathers, they did not obtain the local franchises and became a serf people. Their occupation was to carry sand and earth in leathern bags and spread a soil over rocky places, as is still done in parts of Ireland, to make fertile land. From this occupation, they were named Fir Bolg. They afterwards used the hides in which they worked to construct ships in the ancient fashion, and in these ships they escaped back to Ireland and liberty.

Quite a different version of the story is found in the Book of Lecan, a book which contains a great miscellany, awaiting most desirable publication, of excerpts from older writings, especially excerpts of material which does not accord with what one may call the received teachings of later times on matters of Irish legend and tradition. This particular passage contains what is doubtless the oldest extant account of the Fir Bolg. Its language, in my opinion, is of not later date than the eighth century. Like the accepted story, it says that they were a branch of the race of Nemed, but unlike the accepted story, it does not say that they left Ireland in a body and came back to it in a body after many years. On the contrary, it tells us that they continued to inhabit Ireland all the time, but carried on a particular trade with the eastern world. The manner of their trade was this. They put Irish earth into leathern bags and exported it to the east, where they sold it to the Greeks to be spread on the ground around their cities as a protection against venomous reptiles. From this trade they got the name of Bagmen.

Dubhaltach Mac Fir Bhisigh, in the unpublished introduction to his Book of Genealogies, tells us that Fir Bolg was the specific name of a particular section of the pre-Gaelic population, but became extended in common usage so as to be applied to the whole of that population. Of this statement we have abundant corroboration, with details enabling us to locate the abode of various sections of the Bag-folk properly so called. One section, called Bolgraighe, was the principal Rent-paying community of the ancient Tir Conaill, a territory of much smaller extent than the Tir Conaill of later times. Another section inhabited the district of Sliabh Badbgna (Slieve Baune) in the east of County Roscommon, where, I have been told, popular tradition still recognises their descendants. Another section dwelt in the district of Cong in the south of County Mayo, another in Sliabh Eachtgha (Aughty) in the south of County Galway.

The manufacture of bags from hide or leather was no doubt not a highly esteemed occupation, and it was probably out of contempt that the name Fir Bolg was extended to the whole conquered population by the Celtic ascendancy. The subject communities produced not only skilled artisans but men of great piety and learning in early Christian times. Saint Mo-Chuarog, for example, who is called *Sapiens*, "the Learned," and who introduced a reform into the Irish chronography of his time, was a member of the Rivet-folk, the Seamonraighe of the Déisi. But the general attitude of the Gaels towards the older population was undoubtedly disdainful. The

passage quoted by Dubhaltach from "an ancient book" is familiar to many in O'Curry's translation:

"Every one who is black-haired, who is a tattler, guileful, tale-telling, noisy, contemptible; every wretched, mean, strolling, unsteady, harsh and inhospitable person; every slave, every mean thief, every churl, every one who loves not to listen to music and entertainment, the disturbers of every council and every assembly, and the promoters of discord among people—these are the descendants of the Firbolgs, of the Galians, of the Liogairne, and of the Fir Domhnann in Eirinn. But the descendants of the Fir Bolg are the most numerous of all these."

This is fine old ascendancy talk, the sort of language that has served in many ages to justify the oppression of liberty; and there is plenty of evidence that the older population was in some instances subjected to very harsh treatment—in some instances, not in all, nor were the ancient communities always spoken of in such terms of contempt.

Among them, besides industrial groups or castes, there were also others which appear to have followed the profession of arms. Cú Chulainn, according to one tradition preserved by Dubhaltach, belonged to a non-Gaelic tribe called Tuath Tabhairn, and it will be remembered that he is once described as "a small dark man." "Thou little elf!" his charioteer used to call him, to provoke him to do his utmost in the fight. His rival, Fear Diadh, was a noble of the Fir Domhnann from Connacht, and the Fir Domhnann still existed as a subject community in the times to which the tract on the Rent-paying

Folks has relation. They are located in a stretch of country comprising the greater part of the counties of Mayo and Sligo. In the eastern Midlands, from the Shannon to the Irish Sea, the same tract places another of these ancient tribes named the Luaighni—a name still preserved in that of the barony of Lune in Meath. These are represented as forming the chief fighting force of the kings of North Leinster in the heroic period. When Conchobhar sets out to exact reparation for the Táin and the invasion of Ulster, he is met by the forces of the Luaighni at Rosnaree on the Boyne, his heroes one after another are worsted in the fight, his army almost routed, and it is only when their king has fallen in single combat that the Luaighni abandon the field. In the curious story of the revolution brought about by the revolt of the Rent-paying tribes against the oppressive rule of the Gaelic nobility, it is the chief of the Luaighni, Cairbre of the Cat's Head, who becomes king of Ireland for twenty years.

Still more remarkable is the tribute of the ancient saga to the valour and discipline of the Galians. In the ninth century the Galians are still described by the poet Mael Muru as one of the outstanding sections of the population who are not Gaels. The tract on the Rent-paying Folks divides them into three *tuatha* and gives the location of each. They inhabited the northern parts of old Leinster, in the present counties of Wicklow, Kildare, and King's County. The story of the Táin tells how the Galians excelled all the other troops that joined Medb on her march from Cruachain for the invasion of Ulster.

"This enterprise," said the warlike queen, "will be a barren one for all of us, except for one force alone, the Galians of Leinster." "Why blamest thou these men?" said her consort. "Blame them we do not," replied Medb. "What good service then have they done that they are praised above the rest?" said Ailill. "There is reason to praise them," said Medb. "They are splendid soldiers. When the rest are beginning to make their pens and pitch their camps, the Galians have already finished setting up their booths and huts. When the rest are still building booths and huts, the Galians have finished preparing their food and drink. While the others are getting ready their food and drink, the Galians have done eating and feasting, and their harps are playing for them. When all the others have finished eating and feasting, by that time the Galians are asleep. And even as their servants and thralls are distinguished above the servants and thralls of the Men of Erin, so shall their heroes and champions be distinguished above the heroes and champions of the men of Erin on this hosting. It is folly then for the rest to go, for the Galians will enjoy the victory." And in fear and jealousy the queen declared that nothing would please her but to fall upon the Galians and destroy them. Her husband expostulated. "Shame on thy speech!" he said, "a woman's counsel, for no better reason than because they pitch their tents and make their pens so promptly and unwearily." And Fergus interposing swore that he and his Ulstermen would stand by the Galians to the death. The Galians, he said, are but one division

in eighteen of our army. Even so, we shall take care that they shall be no danger to us. And he took and divided the forces of the Galians among the rest so that not five of them were in one place together.

Of this Galian stock came Fionn and Oisin and Oscar and all their kindred, according to some accounts. They were of the sept Ui Tairsigh, one of the three folks who, says Mael Muru, are not of the Gaedhil. This sept dwelt at Drumcree in the barony of Delvin in Westmeath. Their name and existence as a sept is probably not so ancient as the time of Fionn, but we may suppose that in their own time they claimed descent from the family of Fionn, from Clann Bhaoisgne.

Other possible instances of occupation-castes are found in the names Céchtraighe " plough-folk," Corbraighe and Corbetrighe " chariot-folk ' (Carbantorigion, the name of a town of the Selgovae in southern Scotland), Gruthraighe " curd-folk," Lusraighe " herb-folk," Medraighe " weight or balance-folk," Rosraighe " linseed-folk," Rothraighe " wheel-folk," Sciathraighe " shield-folk."

The tinker clans of recent times in Ireland and Scotland may well be survivals of some of these ancient industrial communities.

It is certain that ancient tribes remained in every part of Ireland after their conquest by the Gaels, and retained in some measure during the early Christian period in Ireland their ancient organisation, often under their own ancient lines of chiefs. This is matter of strictly historical record, and if any similar records had existed and were still extant in Britain,

we should hear less of the cheap and easy history of successive populations, each of them completely exterminating those that inhabited the land before them. Writers on history would not find themselves flatly contradicting ethnologists on the strength of their own gratuitous assumptions, when ethnologists say that the modern English race is largely composed of descendants of the primitive inhabitants.

On this subject of primitive races, there is one point which, in passing, I desire to bring out. One of the founders of the modern study of ethnology, Quatrefages, has given a good illustration of a sort of scientific method akin to some that we have had already under consideration. A glance at the map showed him that Ireland represented a north-western limit of the likely spread of the human race in remote times. The migratory movements of antiquity were thought to have, generally speaking, a western trend in Europe. Ireland besides was an island, which in the distant past must have been reached through Britain. Conclusion: Ireland was the place in which to look for primitive European types, and in Ireland the surest place to find the primitive types must be the extreme north-western part. Accordingly, M. Quatrefages packed his portmanteau in Paris and labelled it for Belmullet. This kind of scientific quest is usually successful. It succeeds after the manner of the schoolboy who, before entering into the intricacies of a question in algebra, takes the precaution of providing himself with the answer from the end of the book. M. Quatrefages found the Mayo seaboard swarming with

a primitive race of men. I do not propose to examine his discoveries in detail. Anyone who is curious about them is referred to the late Dr. Hogan's little book on "The Irish People," which is the source of my information. In a paper contributed by me to the Royal Irish Academy's "Clare Island Survey," on the Place-names and Family-names of Clare Island, I showed that nearly half of the families now living there could be traced to an earlier home in distant parts of Ireland. I pointed out that in remote ages, the parts of the sea that adjoin the land and the parts of the land that adjoin the sea must have afforded the freest highway for movements of population. It must have been so in the glacial period and during its decline, when the scanty population must have lived a life like that of the modern Eskimos who travel long journeys in their canoes and change their habitation at will. It must have been so in the barren period that succeeded the age of ice, when animal and vegetable food was much more abundant on the sea-shore than inland. And it must have been so in the succeeding forest period, when the inland regions became difficult to traverse. In fact, until men became tillers of the ground and road-makers, the sea-edge was their grand highway. Hence it is that the population of the seaboard is always the most mixed and variable. The place to look for the least movement and least variation is inland, especially in deeply wooded, swampy or mountain areas, which offer the least attraction to newcomers and from which an older population is hardest to dislodge. And this, I think,

is also the lesson of ethnological research conducted without foregone conclusions. In all western Europe, there is no region that contains a larger proportion of a late-coming population than the Orkneys, Shetlands and Hebrides and distant Iceland, the uttermost extremes of the north-west.

The ancient legends of Ireland tell of certain peoples which are not represented by territorial groups in the historical record. Most conspicuous among these are the Tuatha Dé Danann and the Fomori ("Fomorians"). The late D'Arbois de Jubainville showed very clearly that these two peoples belonged to pagan mythology. His work on the subject can be read in the English translation by Mr. Best, "The Irish Mythological Cycle." I cannot now attempt to go over the ground it covers, even in summary, but shall content myself by adding a few cogent proofs to those which it supplies. About the year 1000 the poet Eochaidh O'Flainn wrote a poem on the Tuatha de Danann. He began by setting himself the question, were these folks human or were they demons. He answers that they were mortal men of Adam's race, and we are even told by what deaths they died. The very fact that the question had to be asked is conclusive as to the popular belief. But the poet was not satisfied with having brushed this popular belief, a survival of paganism, to one side. In his concluding verses he protests "I do not worship them, I worship the one true God." So that as late as the year 1000 people in Ireland still spoke of the Tuatha De Danann as objects of heathen worship.

An older writer, quoted in the Book of Lecan, tells a plainer tale. He does not admit the truth of the ancient mythology, and says that the Tuatha De Danann were a remnant of the fallen angels. They assume, he says, bodies of airy substance so as to become visible to men, the better to tempt them. They come at the call of sorcerers and those who practise malevolent incantations by walking in circles lefthandwise. They used to be worshipped, and it was they who invented the spells sung by smiths and druids and wise-women and pilots and cupbearers. From them druidism came in Ireland.

The poet-historians did not succeed in killing off the Tuatha De Danann. In 1088 the annalist Tigernach died, and in 1084, four years before his death, his chronicle contains an account of a pestilence which visited Ireland at that time. The cause of this pestilence, says the chronicler, was revealed in that year to a certain man, Gilla Lugán, who was in the habit of frequenting a fairy mound at Hallowtide, the old heathen festival of Samhain. There in the year 1084, Oengus appeared to him and told him that the plague was brought to Ireland by legions of evil spirits from the islands of the northern ocean, who spread it over the country with their fiery breath. And Gilla Lugán himself, says the chronicler, afterwards saw one of these demon legions on the rath of Mullaghmast, and in whatsoever direction their fiery breath came on the land, there the plague broke out among the people.

In *Agallamh na Seanorach*, the rulers of the Tuatha Dé Danann are still alive in St. Patrick's time, and

inhabit the hills associated with their memory. One of them has recently come to life once more in Dublin, Finnbheara of Cnoc Meadha. From the hills at Tourmakeady you can see Cnoc Meadha, a low round hill, on the eastern horizon. It was pointed out to me by a man who knew all about it. That is where Finn Bheara lives, he said. He is the king of the Good People. He is not always there. When Finn Bheara is living in Cnoc Meadha, it is a good year for the country. When he goes away, it is a bad year.

A poem in Duanaire Finn tells how Oengus aided the Fiana in their hostilities with king Cormac, and, like the gods in the Homeric poems, remained invisible while he fought on their behalf.

The passage already cited from the Book of Lecan tells how the Tuatha De Danann arrived in Ireland. They came, it says, without ships or boats and first alighted on Sliabh an Iarainn, in the heart of the country.

The mythology of the Irish Celts was not originally shaped in Ireland. They brought it along with them from central Europe, and just as the ancient scriptures of the Hindus bear traces of having been originally composed in a climate very different from that of Hindustan, so I think the Irish mythology shows some traces of its continental origin. The Fomori of Irish tradition were not inhabitants of Ireland. They always appear as invaders. They come from the north, from the unknown places of the northern ocean. The demons who brought the pestilence to Ireland in 1084 were Fomorians.

They are always enemies of the people of Ireland. They were enemies to Parthalon's people, and after them to Nemed's people, the Fir Bolg, and after them to the Gaels. They were a malevolent race of immortals. In the popular view, among heathens, a people expected to be defended by the gods of its own worship. If a hostile people had other gods, these were expected to fight on the other side. Hence there was a natural tendency to regard a double set of immortals, one party being foreign and malevolent, the other domestic and benevolent. But the Irish people, before the Norse invasions, knew no human enemies in the northern ocean. Accordingly, I think that the Fomorians originally belonged to the continental geography of Celtic mythology, and that the sea from which they came was not the ocean to the north of Ireland but the Baltic and the North Sea, and that their islands were originally perhaps Britain and Ireland and the islands of the Baltic and the Scandinavian peninsula itself, which was thought to be an island when it first became known to the Greeks. The Fomorians would be perhaps in part identical with, in part associated with, the gods of the peoples dwelling on the shores of those northern seas before the Celtic expansion northward and north-westward.

We have glanced at the process by which one of our poet-historians endeavoured to transform popular tradition into a kind of history more acceptable to his own school. Christian learning brought into Ireland a double stream of history, derived from the Old Testament and from the Greek and Latin

historians. The two streams had already been mingled in one by early Christian historians like Eusebius and Orosius. The works of these writers were well-known in early Christian Ireland. The Chronicle of Eusebius, a history of the ancient kingdoms of the world, written in parallel columns, a column to each kingdom, was known through the Latin translation by St. Jerome and its continuation by Prosper of Aquitaine in the fifth century. It became the basis of the writing of Irish history, and was continued in Ireland, with an Irish section added, down to the early years of the seventh century. By adopting this basis and model, the early Christian historians of Ireland brought themselves inevitably face to face with the task of linking and fitting the old Gaelic tradition to this existing framework of Biblical and Greco-Latin history.

We cannot doubt that the Celts, like the Greeks, Persians, Egyptians, Northmen and other ancient peoples, had what is called a cosmogony of their own, an account of the beginning of the world. Cæsar tells us that the Druids expounded the nature of the gods and also of the material universe. This cosmogony could find no place in the new scheme, and it disappeared, leaving perhaps a few traces in the genealogies. In like manner, other parts of the popular tradition and native lore required to be transformed and recast to find a place in the accepted scheme of world history. That is why the Tuatha De Danann became mortals in the teaching of the learned while they remained and still remain

immortal in the traditions that come down from heathen times.

The native tradition had its own account of the origin of the Celtic people. That account, as we shall see, was not such as could be adopted into the Christian world-history received from Eusebius and St. Jerome. It was completely rejected by the Irish historians, as completely as modern Irish people reject the substituted account when they say that their ancestors were Celtic.

To provide a theory of the origin of the Gaels more in keeping with the received world-history, a search was made through the Latin historical and geographical writings that were used in the Christian schools of Ireland and suitable discoveries were made. The most serviceable material for the purpose was found in the world-history of Orosius, a Spanish historian who wrote in Latin about the year 400. Quotations from Orosius by name and word for word show that his book was well-known in the Irish schools. It had the advantage of combining a geography of the world with a history of the world.

In those times, the ordinary Latin name for the people of Ireland was Scotti, Scots. It is the name used for them by Orosius, and also by St. Patrick, and it was accepted by all the early Irish writers who wrote in Latin. But this name Scotti does not appear in Latin before the fourth century and gave no direct clue to trace the origin of the Gaels. In the historical and geographical Latin writings to hand, the people's name that most nearly resembled

Scotti was Scythi, Scythians. Accordingly, we are told that the Gaelic people were of Scythian origin.

There was an independent and evidently earlier effort to account for their origin in a precisely similar way. The man of learning who undertook this effort fastened his attention not on the name Scotti but on the older Latin name Hiberni, and searched his Latin authorities for a corresponding name of some ancient people. He found that there was an ancient people in the region of the Caucasus mountains who bore the name Iberi, and we have the result in an old tract quoted in the Book of Lecan :

" Question : what is the true origin of the Sons of Mil [*i.e.* the Gaels] ? Answer : A race there is in the mountains of Armenia, Hiberi they are named. They had a famous king, Mil, son of Bile, son of Nem. He was contesting the kingship with his father's brother, Refellair son of Nem, and he went into exile with the manning of four barks, and twelve married couples to each bark, and a soldier over and above without wife. . . ." And so the story goes on until the descendants of these Iberi come to Ireland.

It is not unlikely that this account was known to Saint Columbanus of Bobbio. In letters written about the year 600, he speaks of his own people not as Scotti or Hiberni, but as Iberi.

The two accounts appear to have been blended together by making the Scythians, before they reached Ireland, sojourn for a time in Spain, the country of the western Iberi. This gave a satis-

factory explanation of both names, Hiberni and Scotti.

The story of their wanderings through the world is itself a geographical description of the ancient world, based in detail on the geographical chapters of Orosius. Of this story also there are two distinct versions. In one they travel overland through the continent of Europe, passing through the various peoples and territories named by Orosius. It was on this journey that they fell in with the Picts, for whom also a close scrutiny of Virgil provided two distinct origins, as already told. In the other account they sailed round the world, and the names of the various places they touched or passed in the narrative are also taken from the geography of Orosius. A noteworthy feature of that geography is that it is based on the early writings of Eratosthenes and Strabo and entirely ignores the much larger and more accurate knowledge recorded by Ptolemy in the second century. For example, according to Orosius, the Caspian Sea opens by a strait directly into the northern ocean, and the river Ganges flows into the eastern ocean on the eastern side of Asia. Accordingly we find in the Irish story that our ancestors sailed right out of the Caspian into the northern ocean, then turning eastward came round by the eastern coast of Asia, and passed on that coast the outlet of the Ganges.

This view of the world's geography continued to be taught in the Irish schools for centuries. It may be remarked here that the rotundity of the earth was also the common teaching of these schools.

It is still more curious to note how the wording of Orosius has supplied some remarkable details in the Irish story. It will be remembered how Bregon, chief of the Gaels in Spain, built a tower on the northern Spanish coast, the Tower of Bregon, and how, one fine evening in spring, his grandson went up to the top of this tower and from it descried the land of Ireland. When the Gaels afterwards took ship and came to Ireland, the place where they landed was Inbhear Scéine. All this comes from the actual phraseology of Orosius.

"The second angle of Spain, he writes, points to the northwest, where Brigantia, a city of Galicia, is situated and rears its lofty lighthouse, of a structure with which few can be compared, looking towards Britain." The last words might also be taken to mean "for a view of Britain," and it was in this sense that they struck the imagination of the Irish schoolman. He thought of a tower so tall that Britain was actually visible from it. A few chapters further on he read that "Hibernia is an island situated between Britain and Spain," a notion of its position due to the fact that ships sailing by the old Atlantic trade route were accustomed to call at some Irish harbour on their voyages between Spain and Britain. If then Britain was visible from the lofty tower of Brigantia, and Ireland lay between Britain and Spain, Ireland must also be visible from the tower. Bregon or Breogan appears to have been a real name in Irish tradition. It resembled the name Brigantia. So we are told that Brigantia took its name from Bregon, the Gaelic

chief, and that the tower there was built by him. This impression of Ireland lying within sight of Spain was confirmed by other passages of Orosius. "The ocean," he says, "has islands which they call Britain and Ireland, which are situated over against one side of Gaul and looking to Spain (*ad prospectum Hispaniae*)." And again speaking of Ireland: "The fore parts of this island, stretching towards the Cantabrian ocean (*i.e.*, the Cantabrian part of the ocean, the Bay of Biscay) behold far away over a wide intervening space Brigantia, the city of Galicia, facing them towards the northwest, especially from that promontory where the mouth of the river Scena is, and where the Velabri and Luceni inhabit." The tower of Brigantia "looked towards" Ireland, and the south-western parts of Ireland "beheld" Brigantia. It is quite possible that Orosius himself used these expressions in their literal sense. At all events they were so interpreted by his Irish reader. The Irish legend tells us that the Sons of Mil, who was grandson of Bregon, having learned that a land was seen to the north-west from the tower of Bregon, set sail for that land and, after certain adventures, put into a haven called Inbhear Scéine. Where was Inbhear Scéine? Its locality has been the subject of some discussion. If you turn up the name in Dr. Hogan's Onomasticon, you will find that there are no data to enable you to decide which of the havens of south-western Ireland bore that name, and for a very good reason. The name Inbhear Scéine did not belong to Irish topography. It belonged to this story, and is a transla-

tion of the words of Orosius, *ostium Scenae*. There is no river of the name and no known record of the name as that of any river in Ireland: nor is there evidence that those who wrote and re-wrote the story of the Gaelic invasion in ancient times had any more definite notion of the locality of Inbhear Scéine than you or I have.

The fact is that the whole story of the origin of the Gaels in Scythia or in Armenia, their wanderings by land and sea, their settlement in Spain, and their landing in Ireland, is an artificial product of the schools, and does not represent a primitive tradition. It must have displaced the popular tradition. If so, can we find any surviving traces of the older native account of the origin of the Irish Celts? I think we can. We have seen that the Tuatha Dé Danann were an immortal race. They were not all gods. We are expressly told that they were gods and non-gods. They were *tuatha*, i.e., states or communities like those of the ancient Irish people. Their chiefs were gods. When they first came to Ireland, their king was Nuadu Silverhand. As a god, Nuadu was worshipped also in Britain, as several inscriptions of the Roman period testify. From him, according to several genealogical tracts, the whole Gaelic population of Ireland was descended. Other gods as well as Nuadu are clearly named in the ancient pedigrees.

We have seen how the divine race of the Tuatha De Danann came to Ireland in the clouds of the air, without ship or boat, and alighted on the Iron Mountain in the heart of the country. I have

found nothing to show clearly whether their human descendants, the Gaels, were thought to have originated in Ireland or outside of it, except perhaps one scrap of ancient tradition. It was from the northern parts of Europe that the Tuatha De Danann came. The Gaels, according to the learned legend already discussed, came from Spain to south-western Ireland. There is, however, a totally distinct version of their arrival, which says that they first arrived at the opposite corner, in the north-east, in the locality of Fair Head. If this is genuine tradition, it would follow that the Gaels, the offspring of the gods they worshipped, were thought to have originated outside of Ireland, somewhere in northern Europe.

The Book of Invasions, of which a convenient summary is given by Keating, forming the first part of his history, is in its true aspect a national epic which took shape gradually in the early Christian period and under the influence of Christian and Latin learning. It treats the principal elements of the ancient population, both Celtic and Pre-Celtic, as offshoots of one stock, united in ancestry, and it thus symbolises the effective national unity and fusion which had come about. The land of Ireland is the unifying principle, and all the children of the land are joined into one genealogical tree. Some recent writer, I think it is Mr. George Moore, has remarked how Irish people, apparently quite naturally and unconsciously, speak and think of their country as a person. This they have been accustomed to do through all the ages of their

literature. The first words spoken by a Gael on Irish soil, in the ancient legend, were an invocation addressed to Ireland herself by the druid Amorgen: "I entreat the land of Eire," and the land itself, under its three names, 'Eire, Fódla, and Banbha, when the Gaels arrived, was reigning as queen over the Men of Ireland. Thus we find the clearly formed idea of one nation, composed of diverse peoples, but made one by their affiliation to the land that bore them—the clearest and most concrete conception of nationality to be found in all antiquity.

IV. THE FIVE FIFTHS OF IRELAND

WE have seen how the poet-historians of early Christian Ireland took over certain Latin histories of the world, especially St. Jerome's translation of Eusebius and the history of Orosius, and adopted these as the established framework of the world's history, thereby compelling themselves to adjust their own accounts of the Irish past to that framework. In the process of adjustment they did not all work hand in hand, and so we have different and sometimes contradictory accounts and at least half-a-dozen distinct chronologies. They found a mass of Irish traditions and legends embodied in stories long and short. They set to work on this material, endeavouring to arrange it all in sequence and to provide it with dates—the original matter being largely independent of date or sequence. This task became in fact the principal work of a certain school or class of poets, as we learn from a passage which, though found in the Book of Leinster, is held to date from about the eighth century. It is headed: "Of the Qualification of Poets." The word translated "qualification" by O'Curry, and not inaptly so translated, is *nemthigud*, derived from the word *nemed*, the Old Celtic adjective *nemetos*, meaning "sacred." A sacred place was called *nemed*, and a sacred person was also called

nemed. The old law tract which deals with the privileges and rights of the poets is entitled *Bretha Nemed*, i.e., decisions regarding sacred persons. The tract in the Book of Leinster tells us that certain kinds of knowledge were necessary qualifications for certain classes of poets, in order that they might be entitled to the privileges of their class and become in that sense sacred persons, who, in virtue of the reverence due to them, might enjoy special rights and immunities. The knowledge required of them was not a knowledge of prosody or grammar, nor of chronology or geography, or any other science of the times. It was a knowledge of the stories of ancient Ireland, so thorough that they should be able to recite these stories in the presence of kings and chiefs, not a select few of the stories but scores and fifties of them. A mere memorised knowledge of the stories, however, was not sufficient, and something more than the ability to recite them to the satisfaction of courtly patrons was deemed essential to qualify the person as a poet, for the tract concludes by saying: "He is no poet who does not synchronise and adjust together all the stories." This means clearly that it was, at the time, an essential part of the poet's work to make a consecutive and dated history out of the sagas of antiquity.

In this way was produced a history of Ireland from the beginning down to Saint Patrick's time. From that time onward the ancients, like ourselves, relied on the written chronicles of Ireland.

Among the written stories of antiquity, the

primacy was accorded to those of the Ulster epic, Táin Bó Cuailnge and the other tales that range around it. Evidence of this primacy will be found in the oldest known Irish chronicle, in poems assigned by Meyer to the seventh century, and in the framework of the ancient genealogies. A number of modern investigators assure us that the antiquarian tradition of the Ulster sagas is marvellously true to the facts established by archæological research in regard of the age to which those sagas relate, the beginning of the Christian era. Their historical tradition was adopted without question by our medieval historians. The main fact of that historical tradition was that Ireland, in the time of Cú Chulainn, was divided into five coordinate chief kingdoms, whose kings were equal in rank and were not subordinate to a central monarchy. The old historians consequently call this period *Aimser na Cóicedach* (Aimsir na gCúigeadhach), the Time of the Pentarchs (the five equal kings), and leave the monarchy a blank at that time, though they profess to be able to give a list of kings of all Ireland for the earlier and later periods. This list of the pagan Monarchs of Ireland is not historical. It is compiled in a very artificial way from the pedigrees of various Irish dynasties, in a way so artificial that one name, the origin of which can be traced to the sleepy blundering of a copyist, a name which never belonged to any man, is found as the name of a king of Ireland in the list, with appropriate details telling how he acquired the sovereignty and how he lost it, and

how many years he reigned. On the other hand, we are told that the fivefold division of Ireland was older than the Gaelic occupation. In fact, its origin was prehistoric, and the Pentarchy is the oldest certain fact in the political history of Ireland. That it is a certain fact, nobody who is acquainted with Irish literature and tradition will be disposed to question. To this day the word *cuigeadh*, "a fifth," is in general use among speakers of Irish as the term to denote each of the principal subdivisions of the country; and *cuig cuigidh na hEireann*, "the Five Fifths of Ireland," is an expression familiar to all who speak the Irish language. This term *cuigeadh*, in this sense, is found in every age and generation of our written literature. And yet it is certain that throughout the whole period of our written literature, the political division of Ireland represented by this word *cuigeadh*, "a fifth," and "the Five Fifths of Ireland," had no existence. Already in St. Patrick's time the Five Fifths were only a memory of the past. Then and for centuries afterwards, instead of five, there were seven co-ordinate chief kingdoms and a monarchy over them.

It is evident that a political fact which impressed itself so permanently on the vocabulary, the literature, and the folk-memory of the people for at least fifteen hundred years was not the transitory thing that appears in the lists of Irish monarchs before Christianity, a Pentarchy which lasted only during a few years and interrupted for that time the course of an earlier and later Monarchy. The

details of tradition, upon examination, indicate that the Pentarchy preceded the Monarchy and lasted for a long time, long enough to become the chief outstanding fact in tradition as regards the internal political state of Ireland in the early Celtic period.

Now we come to the question, what were the five principal divisions of Ireland under the Pentarchy? In my experience, the less erudite who are interested in such matters usually answer, Ulster, Leinster, Munster, Connacht and Meath. Those who are better read in Irish history will answer, as a rule, leaving out Meath and will say that there were two Fifths comprised in Munster, and this is the teaching of Irish historians for some centuries back. In this case, it will be seen that the less learned folk are nearer to the truth.

Let us first consider what our information is regarding the Two Fifths comprised in Munster. Keating gives two alternative divisions of Munster to form the Two Fifths. In one division, the dividing line runs north and south, from Limerick to Cork Harbour. This delimitation seems to be based on the ancient extent of Munster, which did not include County Clare. The second partition of Munster, according to Keating, is by a line running from Tralee to Slieve Bloom, a very unlikely boundary, as will be evident to anyone who tries to place it on the map. The portion south of this line, we are told, was the realm of Cú Raoi, and the portion north of it was the realm of Eochaidh MacLuchta. These two names belong to the Ulster

cycle, and we should expect the division connected with them to hold good in the topography of the Ulster tales, but we shall find that the Ulster tales speak of Eochaidh MacLuchta as king of all Munster and speak of Cú Raoi as a great Munster hero, but not as king of half Munster. That is not the whole story. Keating tells us that Tuathal Teachtmhar, when he became king of Ireland, established a small domestic realm for himself in the centre of Ireland, around Uisneach, by cutting off a section from each of the Five Great Fifths, and that the boundaries of all five, until his time, met at one point, the rock called Aill na Mireann, on the slope of Uisneach hill. Look at the map of Ireland, bearing in mind that the county Clare was not at that time and long after it a part of Munster, and ask yourself what possible dividing line between two kingdoms of Munster could have terminated in the hill of Uisneach, which stands ten or twelve miles westward from Mullingar.

The Five Great Fifths of Ireland are a living fact in the political framework of the stories of the Ulster Cycle. Surely then it is in those stories themselves and in the antiquity of their tradition that we must seek the evidence about these divisions, their location and extent, and not in the unreconciled statements of writers in a later age. The teaching of the Ulster stories on this matter is clear and unmistakable. It is the same throughout all of them and will be found summarised in a few sentences of the story of the Battle of Rosnaree. First we are told how this battle was caused. In the

great expedition of Táin Bó Cuailnge, four of the Great Fifths had joined together for the invasion of Ulster. The invasion was not a military success, but it had secured its object, the carrying away of the Brown Bull in spite of the Ulster king, and Ulster had suffered from the ravages of war. Conchobhar, following up the retreating army of Connacht, had overtaken and defeated it on the banks of the Shannon, but he had not recovered the Brown Bull, and the other three Fifths of Ireland had got away without making any reparation for the great raid. And Conchobhar vowed that he would exact reparation or inflict punishment. He called the forces of Ulster together. These things were speedily reported to the other four Fifths of Ireland, and without delay the king of each Fifth prepared for resistance and summoned his forces to meet him at his royal seat. Here follows a recitation of the names of the four kings and their four capital places in which their armies were mustered.

The king of Tara, Cairbre Nia Fear, called out the Luaighni of Tara to meet him at Tara. It is to be remembered that in these stories Tara is not the royal seat of kings of all Ireland. There are no kings of all Ireland.

The Galians of Leinster are summoned to meet their king, Fionn File, at Dinn Riogh on the banks of the Barrow.

The Clanna Deadhadh, which is another name for the Iverni or 'Erainn of Munster, are summoned to meet their king, Eochaidh Mac Luchta, at his royal seat of Teamhair 'Erann.

The muster of Connacht is held by Ailill and Meadhbh at Cruachain.

In this account of the five musters, there is no room for misconception. The author of the story was not in the slightest doubt as to the identity of the Five Fifths. His account is in complete harmony with the whole tenour of the stories relative to that age. In it, there is one Fifth of Munster, and all possibility of another is precluded. There is one Fifth of Connacht and one Fifth of Ulster. How are the two remaining Fifths constituted ?

The capital of one of them is Tara, that of the other is Dinn Riogh on the Barrow. We learn from Keating and all other authorities and traditions that, in the period of Cú Chulainn and the Ulster hero tales, the river Boyne, in its lower course, separated Ulster from Leinster. Tara, on the south side of the Boyne, was in Leinster territory. Hence it is plain that Leinster and not Munster comprised two of the Five Great Fifths.

People sometimes say to me and have said to me since these lectures began, " You are very ruthless in tearing away from us some of our most cherished traditions." Now, if I showed any contempt for tradition, this reproach would be altogether too mild. Tradition, if it is indeed tradition, is worthy of all reverence. It is not infallible. Tradition is a people's memory, and a people's memory, like yours or mine, has its limitations. We are all agreed that the Gaels are of Celtic origin and that their language is a Celtic language, but there is no tradition for it. From the earliest recorded traditions of Ireland and

Britain down to the writing of the history of Scotland by Buchanan, not the faintest trace of such a tradition has been found. Nevertheless there are fields of historical inquiry in which tradition is the most faithful witness, and one such field is the internal polity of Ireland during the centuries that precede the written record. In that field, so far am I from despising tradition, that my main effort is to find tradition and establish its authority. We must get away from the notion that everything that is written by Keating or the Four Masters or in the Book of Invasions about that early time is tradition. The Scythian origin of the Gaels, the geographical details of their wanderings, the tower of Bregon, the landing at an unknown Inbhear Scéine—these things do not belong to tradition, they are the inventions of Latin scholars, suggested to them by ancient Latin writers.

The evidence on which I rely with regard to the Five Fifths of ancient Ireland is unquestionably traditional. The evidence that I have quoted on the point does not stand alone. It is not singular and inconsistent. On the contrary, it will be found to fit in with the whole body of ancient tradition, and taken along with the other evidences, it will be found to give life and reality to the history of an obscure yet most interesting period.

Following up the ancient testimony, we find that Cairbre Nia Fear, the king of Tara in Cú Chulainn's time, was brother to Fionn File, the king of Dinn Riogh. Both were Leinstermen, Lagenians. Turning to the genealogies we find that the descent of all

the Leinster kings in Christian times is traced from Fionn File. Tara therefore was the capital or royal seat of a Leinster kingdom, and that kingdom was one of the Great Fifths. If we look up Father Hogan's Onomasticon, we shall see that this fact was otherwise clearly recognised. The kingdom of which Tara was the capital was named in ancient writings by the name " Cairbre's Fifth," Cóiced Coirpri.

Further we find that in many old documents the former existence of two Fifths belonging to the Laighin, or ruling folk of Leinster, is definitely recognised. One of these divisions is called Cúigeadh Laighean Tuadh-Gabhair and the other Cúigeadh Laighean Deas-Gabhair. These names mean that one of the Fifths lay to the north and the other to the south of a place or district called Gabhair. There were a number of places so named in various parts of Ireland, several of them in ancient Leinster. The word *gabhair* was evidently a topographical term having a definite meaning indicating some physical feature of the country, but I have not found it defined in any dictionary or glossary. Examining the various instances of its use in place-names and the conformation of the localities so named, I have come to the conclusion that *gabhair* most probably denoted a low broad ridge between two river valleys. There were two localities so named in the middle of Leinster. One was called Gabhair Life, with reference to the river Liffey. In the first poem of *Duanaire Finn* it is mentioned as the place where dwelt the maiden Life from whom the river, we are told, took its name : " In Gabhair

between two mountains, there the modest maid abode." This probably refers to the district of Donard in Co. Wicklow, between the waters of the Liffey and the Slaney. The two valleys are separated by a low watershed, and bounded on their outer sides by mountainous country. Westward from this, in the south of County Kildare, is a district which was anciently called Gabhair Laighean. This means Gabhair of the Lagenians, and the name suggests that it was the distinctive boundary between the two Fifths of the Lagenians. It is situated between the valleys of the Barrow, the Liffey and the Slaney, and may be regarded as the westward extension of Gabhair Life. Further evidence on the point is supplied by two glosses in the Book of Rights. One of these says that Laighin Deas-Gabhair is Ui Ceinnsealaigh, the other says it is Osraighe. I think we may take both together and regard the southern Fifth of Leinster as comprising both territories, which are represented by the dioceses of Ferns and Ossory. If O'Donovan is right in identifying Dinn Riogh with a site near Leighlin Bridge, on the bank of the Barrow, we should add to the territories named the diocese of Leighlin, which lies between Ossory and Ferns. But there is good evidence that the ancient Fifth of South Leinster was still more extensive. It extended over a considerable part of eastern Munster, taking in almost the whole county of Tipperary and a small part of County Limerick.

The territory of Ossory, we are told, stretched from Gabhrán to Grian, *i.e.*, from the district of

Gowran in County Kilkenny to the district of Pallasgreen in County Limerick.

There were several stories which explained how and why this western part of Leinster was transferred to Munster. According to one account

> Osraige ö Gabrán co Gréin
> tucad i n-éiric Eterscéil.

The territory of Ossory was forfeited to Munster in consequence of the slaying of Ederscél, king of Ireland, father of Conaire Mór. Ederscél was of the Ivernian race. A second account is alluded to by a poem in the Book of Rights, claiming that Ossory was rightfully subject to the kings of Munster, having been forfeited for the killing of Fergus Scannal, king of Munster. The third account is much more elaborate. It is found in the story of the Migration of the Déisi, a story which in its extant form dates from about the year 750. It tells how the Dési were expelled from the region of Tara; how one part of them crossed the sea and settled in Wales; how another part sojourned for a long time in Leinster, but at last entered the service of the king of Munster and acquired a territorial settlement by conquering and annexing to Munster the western part of the territory of Ossory. The story relates that the men of Ossory were first driven eastward over the Suir; they rallied near Clonmel and were again defeated and driven across the Anner; were followed up by the Déisi and finally forced over the Lingaun river, which to this day forms part of the boundary between Ossory and

Munster. The baronies of Iffa and Offa took their name and origin from a branch of the Déisi settled in the conquered territory. West of the Suir in County Tipperary are the baronies of Upper and Lower Kilnamanagh. These were formerly O'Dwyer's country, and the territory was ruled by the ancestors of the O'Dwyers from time immemorial. But the line of the O'Dwyers and their forefathers was an offshoot of the ruling people of South Leinster. In the genealogies, Fionn File is their ancestor, the same who was king of South Leinster in Cú Chulainn's time. Of the same Leinster stock came the sept Ui Cuanach, whose name and territory is represented in the present barony of Coonagh in County Limerick, adjoining O'Dwyer's country. On the western side of this territory was the district of Grian, the western limit-point of ancient Ossory.

I have found no very decisive indication of the westward extent of ancient Leinster along the southern coast. However, the story of the Déisi migration shows no distinction between the Déisi settlements south of the Suir in County Waterford and those north of the Suir in County Tipperary. There is nothing to indicate that the Munster king settled one portion of his allies on conquered territory and another portion on territory already in his possession, and the whole tenour of the story associates the settlement with the displacement and dispossession of the Men of Ossory. Therefore, I think it probable that the territory of Ossory included the greater part of County Waterford, as

far west as Cappoquin and the Blackwater from Cappoquin to the sea.

As in the case of the eastern parts of Munster so in the case of the part beyond the Shannon, now County Clare, there is more than one story to account for the annexation. When several stories are given to explain a fact, though they contradict each other in the manner of the explanation, they form a strong corroboration of each other as to the fact itself. That Clare was at one time part of Connacht is the universal testimony of antiquity.

Ancient Munster, therefore, the Munster of the heroic period, comprised the counties of Cork and Kerry, the greater part of Limerick and some small area of Tipperary and Waterford. It was the smallest of the Five Great Fifths and there is no need to bisect it to form two of them. The bisecting lines mentioned by Keating, however, are not likely to have been purely imaginary. They refer in my opinion to political boundaries of a later age. We have evidence of the division of Munster in early Christian times into what may be called two distinct spheres of influence. Besides the Eoghanacht dynasty which then ruled in Cashel, there were other branches of the same dynasty ruling in various parts of Munster. Of these the most powerful was the Eoghanacht of Loch Léin, also called the Eoghanacht of Iarmuma, "West Munster." Some of its kings are reckoned as kings of Munster, and hostile to the kings of Cashel. The dividing line from Limerick to Cork Harbour may indicate the boundary between the groups of states which

acknowledged the eastern and the western authority. As regards the other line from Tralee to Slieve Bloom, I think it is founded on the fluctuating extent of the rival authority of the Dalcassian and Eoghanacht dynasties during the period between the battle of Clontarf and the Norman invasion. During that period we read of kings of the Eoghanacht lineage who are called kings of Cashel and Desmond. They are of the family of MacCarthaigh. North of the line, the power of the kings of Thomond was predominant.

The boundaries of ancient Connacht are fairly certain. The Shannon throughout its course formed the principal limit. From the head of the Shannon to the sea at Donegal Bay the boundary was nearly the same as it still is.

Between Ulster and North Leinster, the boundary ran from Loch Bóderg on the Shannon through the southern part of County Leitrim, and thence in the direction of Granard; thence by the present boundary of Ulster eastward as far as the Blackwater, down along the Blackwater to Navan and from Navan along the Boyne to the Irish Sea. On the expedition of the Táin, Medb's army skirted this boundary, keeping on the Leinster side, until they reached the Blackwater; and the story tells how they looked across the Blackwater at "the foreign territory" (*in chrich aineoil*).

Such was the division of Ireland under the Pentarchy at the beginning of the Christian Era, as disclosed by the oldest traditions.

When we come to St. Patrick's time, the fifth

century, we feel ourselves within the scope of clear and definite written records. These ancient boundaries are for the most part only memories. There is no longer a Pentarchy but a Heptarchy, which remains substantially unchanged for several centuries and is described in detail by the Book of Rights, compiled about the year 900 and revised about a century later.

In this new arrangement, Munster has its present extent plus the southern angle of King's County. Connacht has lost County Clare, but has annexed territory east of the Shannon as far as Loch Erne and Loch Ramor in County Cavan. This territory has been taken from Ulster, which no longer exists as a political unit, but is divided into three of the seven chief kingdoms. These are the kingdom of Ailech on the west, the kingdom of Ulaidh on the east, and the kingdom of Airgialla or Oriel in the middle. The Fifth of North Leinster has ceased to be a kingdom. There is only one kingdom of Leinster, which extends as far north as Dublin, the river Liffey and its tributary the Rye, which runs by Maynooth. This kingdom contains what remains of North and South Leinster and is ruled by the ancient dynasty of South Leinster.

The seventh chief realm is that of Meath which has been formed from parts of North Leinster and of Ulster. Its northern boundary is nearly but not quite the same as the present northern boundary of Leinster. It takes in part of County Cavan and excludes the northern part of County Louth, north of Ardee.

The strictly historical period in Ireland begins with St. Patrick. The authentic writings of St. Patrick are the earliest written documents of Irish history. But I do not think it would be just to say that all before that time is prehistoric. If all we had for the first four centuries of the Christian Era was a slender thread of narrative like Livy's story of ancient Rome, we might wonder how much profit, if any, could come from examining it. We are not in so poor a case. We have a substantial mass of traditions, connected and disconnected, which, I think, enable us to supply the void of written documents in a manner that will carry conviction.

The period in question begins with the solid background of the Pentarchy. It ends with the solid foreground of the Christian Heptarchy. The problem before the student is not merely to fill up the intervening space with a random collection of traditional material, but to find out by what stages and through what causes the transformation took place; how a central monarchy came into being; how Ulster was broken up into three distinct realms; how Leinster contracted from two great kingdoms into one; how the new and powerful kingdom of Meath was established; and how Munster grew to about twice its ancient extent.

Our old native historians did not concern themselves with accounting for anything. Their chief model was Eusebius, and Eusebius was content to give lists of kings with the length of each king's reign as the sole history of various realms of antiquity throughout centuries. So the only con-

secutive history we find of Ireland before St. Patrick's time consists in like manner of regnal lists with little bits of anecdotal matter added here and there. Even these regnal lists are not authentic. They are made up artificially from pedigrees, and I have already shown that the method was so recklessly artificial as to make a king out of a misread note to one of the pedigrees. Even the oldest written history of Ireland extant follows this method. It does not indeed extend the Irish monarchy back to the Gaelic invasion. It declares the authentic history of Ireland to begin with the foundation of Emain Macha, dated 305 B.C., and it begins the Tara monarchy in A.D. 46. But from this date onward it gives the succession of the high-kings, and that succession is one of a kind unknown in the historical period. It is a succession from father to son, which is contrary to the known custom of all the insular Celts, in Ireland, Wales, and Scotland. In other words, it is again merely a pedigree converted into a dynastic succession.

When a single pedigree is utilised in this way, the fact is easily discovered. Later historians adopted a less obvious artifice, and one at the same time which made their account more widely acceptable. They shortened the reigns of the kings in the earlier history so as to leave gaps between them, and into these gaps they inserted names from other pedigrees besides that of the Tara monarchs. They took these names in turn from the genealogies of the kings of Munster, Leinster, Oriel, etc., and thus, by giving every part of Ireland a share in the

monarchy, they produced a regnal history which was flattering in an all-round way and which succeeded in relegating the earlier device to comparative oblivion.

I had become familiar with this plan of transforming pedigrees into regnal lists before I first read Buchanan's history of Scotland. In that book I found a list of forty-three kings who reigned over Scotland before Fergus of Dal Riada went over from Ireland. All the names seemed strange. They were apparently Latinised from some other language, the history being written in Latin. Were they invented, like the names in "Gulliver's Travels," or, if not, where were they found? Can it be, I asked myself, that the Scottish historians, like the Irish, filled the vacuum out of pedigrees? And if so, out of what pedigrees? Now it is a matter of historical record that, on the inauguration of a king of Scotland, a part of the ceremony consisted in the recitation of his pedigree, and this custom was kept up until the Dal Riada line died out with Alexander III in 1285. Therefore, I argued, the pedigree most familiar to an early Scottish historian was that of the kings of Dal Riada. I turned up this pedigree in the Irish genealogies and my conjecture was confirmed. Scotland and Ireland are all along agreed that Fergus MacEirc, an Irish prince, settled in Scotland and founded there a new kingdom and dynasty. But the forty-three kings of Scotland named before Fergus are nevertheless the forty-three ancestors of Fergus, from father to son, in the Irish genealogy. The list comprises names so well known

in Irish story as Ederscél, that Munster king, whose death is said to account for the forfeiture of Leinster territory to Munster; his son Conaire Mór, whose tragic fate is told in the story of Da Derga's Hostel; and the younger Conaire, son of Mugh Lámha, who also figures in the Irish hero-lore. All these and their forefathers, up to the eponymous Iar, head of the Ivernian stock, figure one after another in the artificial history of the first Scottish dynasty beyond the sea.

Let us get away then from such unprofitable material and let us see what comes to us in the guise of traditions of substance. We start off from the Pentarchy and the Ulster cycle. The Ulster stories have for their main basis the hostile relations between Ulster and Connacht. Being Ulster stories, they do not prolong their scope beyond a time in which Ulster has generally the best of it. Ulster's mishaps merely serve to heighten the effect, which is Ulster's heroism and victory. It was when this time of glory was but a memory, when Emain was a deserted site and the remnant of the Ulaidh occupied only a tiny fraction of their former territory, that these stories took their present shape and were committed to writing. We have to turn to another set of traditions, to those connected with the monarchical kindred of historical time, to learn how things developed from the stage depicted in the Ulster tales.

The course of development will be more clearly followed if it is stated in summary beforehand. The hostile relations between Ulster and Connacht con-

tinued, but the kings of Connacht grew gradually more powerful. They extended their power step by step over central-eastern Ireland, the ancient Fifth of North Leinster, and then step by step over all Ulster except what is now comprised in the counties of Down and Antrim. Upon the increase of power thus acquired they established a hegemony or primacy over all Ireland. This primacy found its definite expression in the institution of the high-kingship or Monarchy.

The first stage in the process was the occupation of Uisneach by Tuathal Teachtmhar. Who was this Tuathal? According to the genealogies he was sixth in descent from Eochu Feidlech, who was the father of Medb, queen of Connacht. Accepting Medb's date as fixed or estimated by all our ancient writers, she flourished just at the commencement of the Christian Era. Tuathal was five generations later, and from dated Irish pedigrees we can calculate an average of almost exactly three generations to a century. Tuathal therefore would have flourished in the third quarter of the second century, say between A.D. 150 and A.D. 175. Exact dates are assigned to him in the extant regnal lists, but these lists do not agree with each other, and it is safer to rely on the law of averages. Tuathal, we are told, set up a new kingdom for himself around Uisneach. The territory surrounding Uisneach was part of the old Fifth of North Leinster. Consequently the alliance of the Four Great Fifths against Ulster was no longer operative. Tuathal was a prince of the Connacht dynasty, and his occupation

of Uisneach was an invasion of North Leinster and the first stage in the break-up of the Pentarchy.

With regard to Tuathal we are told that before his birth the Rentpaying tribes throughout Ireland revolted against the Gaelic ascendancy and overthrew it. Tuathal's mother fled to Britain and in Britain he was born. By the time he came of age the revolution had spent its force and a reaction set in. Tuathal returned to Ireland, by some he was welcomed, others he overcame by force, and he became the strongest king in Ireland. It was then that he took possession of Uisneach.

It is difficult to know what exactly to make of this story of a plebeian revolution. In its actual terms, the story is full of improbabilities, and reads like a fairy tale for children. Another difficulty about it is that a similar story is told of Tuathal's grandfather. There is no inherent improbability in the main fact of the story, the occurrence of a plebeian revolution which for a time displaced the Gaelic ascendancy, and the occurrence of a subsequent complete reaction. Something like it happened in France little more than a century ago and in England under Oliver Cromwell. The occurrence of a revolution and the successful survival of the Connacht dynasty may help us to understand how the kings of Connacht were able afterwards to make such headway not only against their ancient rivals in Ulster but against their former allies in North Leinster; that is, if we understand that Connacht was less shaken and weakened by the revolution than the other pro-

vinces were. Again, in the Ulster stories, we hardly hear of the existence of the Picts in Ulster; they are completely dominated by the Ulaidh. But when Ireland emerges into the full light of written history, we find the Picts a very powerful people in east Ulster, Cuailnge itself, the home of the Brown Bull, and the neighbouring plain of Muirtheimhne, Cú Chulainn's patrimony, being now Pictish territory. This may well have been the consequence of some such revolution as the story indicates.

The next stage is the occupation of Tara, the old capital of North Leinster, by Cormac, who is fourth in descent from Tuathal, and who should therefore have flourished in the period A.D. 275–300, a time corresponding closely enough with that to which the regnal lists assign him. The fact of the annexation of Tara and the surrounding region, the territory of Brega, is always glossed over by our old historians. This tacit treatment may perhaps be explained. In their histories generally, the monarchy goes back to the Gaelic invasion, and Tara is the seat of the monarchs in remote antiquity, as it actually was in the early Christian period. This location of the monarchy in Tara from time immemorial, like the assumed existence of such a monarchy, exemplifies a very common tendency, the tendency to project the known present into the unknown past.

The fact of the annexation of Tara and eastern Meath underlies the story of the Battle of Crinna. The cause of this battle, as stated, was the continued hostility of the Ulstermen to king Cormac's

line. One king after another of this line, which, be it remembered, was the Connacht dynasty and still ruled over Connacht, had fallen in fight with the Ulster enemy. Cormac had forced Ulster to give him hostages. Such hostages were by custom honourably entertained according to their rank. The Ulster hostages sat at Cormac's own table. So unsubdued was their spirit that on one occasion they did the king the gross affront of setting fire to his beard. After this, Ulster again took up arms and drove Cormac out of Meath, forcing him to take refuge in his native realm of Connacht. There he gathered his forces and took a Munster prince, Tadhg, son of Cian, into alliance. This Tadhg figures in the genealogies as being the ancestor of a group of dynastic families which in later times ruled over certain states of Connacht, Meath and Ulster, the Luighni, Gaileanga, Cianachta, etc. These states, when we trace them back as far as possible, are native to Connacht; their branches in Meath and Ulster are frontier colonies planted to guard the conquests of the Connacht kings. Tadhg macCéin, in the story, is the personification of these colonies.

Before going into battle, Tadhg made a compact with Cormac the king. They agreed that, if Tadhg came off victorious, Cormac would grant him as much territory as he could ride around in his chariot on the day of victory.

In the battle of Crinna, Tadhg engaged the Ulstermen and completely defeated them. He himself was sorely wounded. He mounted his chariot and set out to ride around the territory he desired

to win for himself and his descendants, and he commanded the charioteer to take such a course as to bring Tara within the circuit. Then, overcome with loss of blood from his many wounds, he fell into a swoon and lay unconscious in the chariot.

King Cormac had foreseen that Tadhg would try to get possession of Tara. He desired Tara for himself, and he bribed the charioteer to leave Tara out of the circuit of the ride. At intervals during the ride, Tadhg awoke from his swoon and on each occasion he asked the charioteer "Have we brought in Tara?" and the charioteer answered "Not yet." At nightfall, Tadhg came to his senses and saw that they had reached the banks of the Liffey near Dublin. "Have we brought in Tara?" he asked again. The charioteer could not answer yes. Tadhg saw that he had been cheated, and he slew the charioteer.

Now the territory that fell to Tadhg's share in the story extended along the coast from Ardee to Dublin and inland along the northern frontier of Meath to Loch Ramor—and these territories in later times were occupied by the Connacht colonies whose rulers claimed descent from Tadhg. Roughly speaking the whole stretch of country forms an L inverted and in the angle of this L stands Tara the ancient capital of North Leinster, but henceforth the capital of Cormac's kingdom.

Except this story of the Battle of Crinna, there is no other story or even title of a story known to me which explains how Tara ceased to be the seat of the North Leinster kings and passed into the possession of the kings of Connacht and Uisneach.

There is no other account which explains why or how the Leinster frontier, which formerly lay along the Boyne and the Blackwater, was afterwards pushed back to the Liffey and the Rye. The territory which fell to Tadhg was partly Ulster territory and partly Leinster territory. Yet in the story itself, there is no mention of Leinster and Cormac's only enemies were the Ulstermen. The story, which in its extant form belongs to a very late period, is evidently defective. It is written in conformity with the theory that the Monarchy existed before the Pentarchy and that Tara was the seat of the Monarchy from time immemorial. Consequently it ignores what we may call the Leinster aspect of the matter, and the conflict seems to be altogether between Cormac and Ulster. Ulster lost land on the north side of the Boyne, and this conquered territory, under the compact, fell to the share of Tadhg. The underlying notion, in this episode of the chariot-ride, is obviously that the victor is to be rewarded with a share of the spoils. If, then, the conquered part of Ulster formed part of his reward, and if in the same bargain he gained part of Leinster between the Boyne and the Liffey, and if he expected to gain Tara, we must, I think, infer that this part of Leinster and Tara likewise were no less conquered territory than the piece of Ulster that fell to Tadhg.

Therefore, there should have been an earlier version of the story, now lost, which showed that not Ulster alone but North Leinster also resisted Cormac and suffered defeat from him and his ally.

Such an account would explain, what remains a complete blank, so far as I know, in this traditional history, how the dynasty of North Leinster came to an end and how Tara and Bregia, south as well as north of the Boyne, passed into the possession of the kings of Connacht and Uisneach.

The reign of Cormac is regarded in our earliest histories as an epoch in Irish history. This, I think, was because it marked the end of the Pentarchy and the rise of the Monarchy seated at Tara.

The next stage in the growth of the Connacht power brings us to the overthrow of the Ulster kingdom and the conquest of the greater part of Ulster. In the century after Cormac, his descendant Muiredach Tireach becomes king of Tara. Muiredach, we are told, in his youth took command for his father, Fiacha Sroibhtine, king of Tara, and was successful in establishing his father's authority in southern Ireland. His uncles, the three Collas, became jealous of his success. The young prince, they said, will be chosen king when his father dies, and we shall be shut out from the succession. They then conspired to overthrow their brother and win the kingship for one of themselves while Muiredach was still absent in the South. They raised an army against the king. Fiacha consulted his druid. The druid answered: You have two alternatives. You can be victorious. If you are, the kingship will pass from your son and your descendants. But if you are defeated and slain, your son and your posterity will rule Ireland. It is the symbol in Irish story of the Triumph of Failure. The king

said, Then I choose defeat and death. The three Collas were victorious, the king fell in the fight. Then all Ireland arose against the victors. Muiredach was chosen king, and the Collas were banished over the sea. They dwelt in exile for some years in Britain, but the guilt of their brother's blood oppressed their souls, and at last they said, We can bear it no longer, we shall go back to Ireland and lay down our lives for our crime. The young king forgave them and took them to his favour. After this, they spoke to him one day and said: Though thou and we are at peace, our sons will grow up and contend with thy sons for the kingship. Give us a kingdom for ourselves and our posterity. It shall be so, said the king. What part of Ireland will you give us? said they. The Ulstermen, said the king, have ever been hostile towards me and towards our fathers. Go and conquer their kingdom, and it shall be yours.

The Collas then went to Connacht, which was still the homeland of the new Tara dynasty, raised an army there, invaded Ulster, were victorious, and captured the Ulster capital. The conquered territory comprised the present counties of Armagh, Monaghan, Tyrone, and the greater part of Fermanagh and Derry.

I wish to dwell on the fact that the conquerors were princes of the Connacht dynasty, then ruling also in Tara. Their army was drawn from Connacht. In fact, all this chain of events is the direct sequel of the old rivalry between Connacht and Ulster that forms the basis of Táin Bó Cuailnge and the Ulster

cycle in general. The inhabitants of the conquered parts of Ulster got the significant name of Airgialla, Oirghialla, "the eastern subjects." In relation to Meath and Tara, they were northern not eastern subjects. The name Airgialla then is based on the fact that the conquering power at the time when the name came into use was still regarded as the western power, its home was Connacht.

Thus ended the Fifth of Ulster. Let us see what was happening meanwhile in southern Ireland. In Munster, under the Pentarchy, the kings of the Erainn or Iverni held rule. In St. Patrick's time, these no longer ruled in Munster. The kings of Munster belonged to a distinct line, called the Eoghanachta. Their capital was no longer in the west. It was Cashel, not far from the eastern border of their kingdom and in territory formerly part of Leinster. To the original extent of the Munster Fifth had been added in the meantime the counties of Clare and Tipperary, a small part of Limerick, and the larger part of Waterford, making the bounds of Munster almost but not exactly what they are at present.

In face of the growing power of the kings of Connacht, how it came about that Clare was detached from Connacht and added to Munster, I cannot explain to my own satisfaction, beyond saying that, within a smaller scope, the Eoghanacht kings of Munster became even more powerful than the kings of Connacht and ruled over a more firmly consolidated realm. During the early Christian centuries, before the Norse invasions, Munster appears to have enjoyed

greater tranquillity than any other realm in Western Europe. The genealogies show that there was an early Eoghanacht settlement in the Clare area, called Eoghanacht Ninuis, and another, still called Eoghanacht, in the island of Arainn Mhór, to the north of Clare.

There were at least two accounts in ancient story of the transfer of Clare to Munster. The time of this event differs by centuries in the two stories, and I shall not endeavour to reconcile them or to choose between them. There are three distinct accounts of the eastern annexation from South Leinster. The only one of these that is full and explanatory, and that fits with the known later stage of things, is the account connected with the Migration of the Déisi.

Let it be noted that Cashel, the seat of the Munster kings in Christian times, stands outside of ancient Munster. Keating relates an ancient story telling how Cashel was "discovered" in the time of Corc, king of Munster, *i.e.*, about A.D. 400, and got a new name. This new name was a Latin one, for Caiseal is the Irish representative of the Latin word *castellum*, "fortress." These things show how late was the use of Cashel as the seat of Munster sovereignty.

What and whence was this new ruling power in Munster, the Eoghanachta? Their genealogies show that at one time they were worshippers of a god named Segomo—one of their ancestors is named Nia Segomon, "Segomo's champion." This god Segomo is unknown to Irish tradition, in which his name is never found outside of the Eoghanacht

genealogy. He was known, however, and worshipped in Gaul, where he is commemorated in several inscriptions of the Roman period. He was a war-god and is equated, according to the fashion of Roman Gaul, with the Latin god Mars—"Deus Mars Segomo." The descendants of Segomo's Champion are named in three Ogham inscriptions, all found in the district of Dungarvan and Ardmore, on the southern seaboard. The indications therefore are that the Eoghanachta represent a relatively late Gaulish settlement in that part of Ireland. The story of the Déisi Migration mentions several bodies of Gaulish settlers.

The Migration of the Déisi is an evident sequel of the conquest of Tara and eastern Meath under Cormac. Déisi means "vassal communities." These particular vassal communities dwelt around Tara, and were possibly identical with the Luaighni, who formed the chief fighting force of North Leinster in Cú Chulainn's time. They quarrelled with Cormac, we are told, and he drove them, or a large part of them, out of Meath. They migrated in two bodies. One body crossed the sea and settled in southern Wales where the descendants of their princes still held sway in the eighth century. The other body settled for a time in Leinster.

Later on this Leinster section entered into an alliance with the Eoghanacht king, Oengus, whose queen was the daughter of their chief. By their aid, Oengus conquered what is now the south-eastern part of Munster, and he settled the Déisi as frontier colonists on the conquered territory. Oengus

flourished in St. Patrick's time, the second and third quarter of the fifth century.

The loss of the large territories about the Boyne and the Suir reduced Leinster to much smaller dimensions. What remained of the two ancient Fifths was now united in one kingdom, ruled over by the line of the ancient kings of South Leinster. This reduction and unification means the final passing away of the Pentarchy described in the Ulster tales. The seat of the Leinster kings is no longer either Tara or Dinn Riogh, but Ailinn, which lies between them, on the southern side of the Curragh of Kildare.

The Connacht kings continued, however, to extend their conquests and their power. A grandson of Muiredach Tirech was king of Tara at the beginning of the fifth century (*c.* A.D. 400), Niall of the Nine Hostages. His brother, Brión (or Brian) took possession of a south-western section of Ulster, comprising a large part of the counties of Leitrim and Cavan, afterwards called Brian's Land—Tír Briúin. Three sons of Niall took possession of what remained of western Ulster, now comprised in the county of Donegal. Their names were Eoghan, Conall, and 'Enda, and the territories occupied by them were called Eoghan's Land, Conall's Land, and 'Enda's land.

Another son of Niall, named Coirbre, obtained a piece of Leinster, now the barony of Carbury in Co. Kildare.

The Connacht dynasty and its branches now ruled over the northern half of Ireland, with the

exception of the eastern seaboard region from Ardee to the Giant's Causeway. It ruled in Tara, and its chief kings were recognised also as Monarchs of Ireland.

The Connacht power, after the time of Niall, was regarded as comprising three chief divisions—the kingdom of Connacht, the Airgialla, and the territory of the descendants of Niall (Uí Néill). All Leinster was laid under tribute to them, and a note in the Book of Leinster says that this Leinster tribute was divided equally among the three sections. This subdivision of the Connacht power, in my opinion, was what gave rise to the ancient term *Teora Connachta*, "the Three Connachts"—a term which seems to have caused some trouble for its explanation to writers of a later age.

An unpublished tract in the Book of Lecan, also found in the introductory part of the Book of Genealogies by MacFir Bhisigh, tells us that during this period, the succession to the Monarchy was regulated in this way: On the death of the Ardri, the king of Connacht took his place as king of Tara. A new king of the same family was elected in Connacht, and this process went on during several generations. Niall was king of Connacht first, of Tara afterwards. And so, in like manner, the high kingship was filled from Connacht until the death of Ailill Molt in A.D. 483 or thereabouts.

The two facts, then, that explain the transformation of the Pentarchy at the beginning of the Christian Era into the Monarchy and seven principal

kingdoms of St. Patrick's time, are these: In the northern half of Ireland, the gradual conquest achieved by the Connacht dynasty; in southern Ireland, the rise of a new power, that of the Eoghanacht kings, centred in Cashel. Along with the direct control of northern Ireland, the Connacht dynasty obtained predominance over the country in general, and this predominance found its natural expression in the high kingship.

Between the establishment of the Connacht dynasty in East Meath and in Tara, the ancient seat of the North Leinster kings, and the overthrow of the Ulster kingdom, there is a period of more than half a century, during which the Ulster power stood at bay. Of this state of things we have a very remarkable record, not written on paper, but graven on the face of the country. The Ulster kings endeavoured to defend themselves against further aggression by fortifying their entire frontier except where it was already protected by strong natural obstacles such as lakes, forests or broad rivers. Linking these natural barriers they raised a massive earthern rampart which, with these barriers, formed a continuous line of defences from the Irish Sea on the east to Donegal Bay on the west. Details of the extant remains of this Great Wall of Ulster and of the popular traditions connected with it will be found in Mr. Kane's paper on the Black Pig's Dyke in the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. These details I am able to supplement with others, but it would be out of place to go into particulars in such a historical sketch as the present. What

I wish to bring under special notice is this—that the Ulster frontier was fortified alike against Meath and Connacht—a further illustration of the fact that during that period Meath and Connacht were politically united under one dynastic power.

V. GREEK AND LATIN WRITERS ON PRE-CHRISTIAN IRELAND

THE earliest known mention of Ireland in literature appears to be found in a passage of the Greek writer Poseidonios which is quoted by Strabo. Poseidonios flourished about 150 B.C.

His information about Ireland is vague, and he says expressly and candidly that his authorities are not trustworthy. Whereas later writers erred in supposing that Ireland lay between Britain and Spain, Poseidonios says that Ireland stretched farther northward than Britain. We have nothing definite to tell about Ireland, he continues, except that the inhabitants are fiercer than those of Britain, being man-eaters and eaters of many kinds of food [we may understand perhaps that he supposed them to eat various foods not eaten by the Greeks]. They think it worthy to devour their own fathers who have died. Their marital customs are of the most unrestricted kind, disregarding even the closest ties of kindred. "This, however, we state as having no reliable testimony." For the custom of cannibalism, he says, is also ascribed to the Scythians, and the Celts and Iberians and many others are likewise said to practise it when reduced to great straits by a siege.

The name of Ireland, as quoted from Poseidonios,

is Ierne, representing an old name Iverna. In Greek, as well as in the early Celtic language of Ireland, the sound of *v* or *w* had a tendency to disappear from words. I think, however, that the Greeks may have taken the name Ierne, without the *v*, direct from a Celtic source, for the dropping of the *v* or *w* sound in Greek took place earlier than the writing of the oldest extant Greek prose, and if the name of Ireland had been known to the Greeks at so early a time, we should expect to find mention of Ireland in early prose writers like Herodotus.

The next known writer who mentions Ireland is Julius Cæsar. The island Hibernia, he writes, is half the size of Britain, and as far distant from Britain as Britain is from Gaul. He calls Ireland Hibernia.

Strabo, who wrote in Greek in the first years of the Christian era, also thought that Ireland extended farther north than Britain, and that Ireland had a colder climate than Britain. This notion, I have already suggested, originated in the Latin name *Hibernus*, which as a Latin word meant "wintry," and was substituted for the Celtic adjective *Ivernos*. The people of Ireland, says Strabo, are quite wild and have a poor way of living owing to the cold climate.

A somewhat later anonymous writer in Greek has more accurate geographical information, perhaps based on the brief statement by Cæsar, placing Ireland to the west of Britain.

Pomponius Mela, whose date is about A.D. 40,

calls Ireland Iuverna, a name also used about the same time by Juvenal. It is a nearer approach to the Celtic form as used in Britain, which at the time was partly occupied by the Romans. Mela says that Ireland is hardly equal in size to Britain, but has an equal length of coastline opposite to Britain. Apparently he supposed Ireland to be a long narrow island, about as long as Britain from north to south, but less in breadth. The climate, he says, is unfavourable to the ripening of seeds, but there is such an abundance of excellent pasturage that cattle get enough food by grazing for a short part of the day and, if they are not restrained, they eat until they burst.

This is fairly accurate. The Irish climate is less favourable to the ripening of certain seeds, such as wheat, than the climate of neighbouring countries. It is not likely that any other seed but wheat is referred to, and we may take the testimony of Mela as evidence that wheat was known in his time to be grown in Ireland, but not so successfully grown as in other countries.

Mela adds: The inhabitants of Ireland are uncivilised and beyond other nations are ignorant of all the virtues, and extremely devoid of natural affection.

A little later, in Pliny's time, the knowledge of Ireland among the Romans was far from being exact. Pliny, on the authority of Agrippa, gives the length of Ireland as 600 Roman miles, its breadth as 300. He thus doubles each dimension and multiplies the size of the island by four.

Tacitus writes that Agricola made special military dispositions on that side of Britain which faces Ireland; and this he did more through hope than through fear, that is to say, rather in view of conquest than of protection. Ireland, he says, is situate between Britain and Spain. It is of smaller area than Britain. In soil and climate and in the character of its inhabitants it differs little from Britain. Its inland parts are little known, its approaches and harbours are better known through commerce and merchants. Agricola received one of its petty kings who had been expelled in a revolt and kept him, under the guise of friendship, against a suitable opportunity. From Agricola, I, says Tacitus, have often heard that Ireland could be conquered and held by a single legion with a moderate force of auxiliaries, and that this would be of advantage as regards Britain, if the Roman military power were established everywhere and freedom, as it were, were put out of sight. Later he writes that Agricola had led his forces to a point close to the Irish Sea when he was brought back by an outbreak among the Brigantes and thought it better to solidify the conquests he had already made than to undertake a new conquest.

The next writer in point of date is Ptolemy the Geographer, who flourished in the middle of the second century. Ptolemy names sixteen peoples, tribes or states, and gives their relative positions on the Irish coast. He names no people or state away from the coast. About half of the names can be authenticated from other sources. The others have

been the subject of much fruitless conjecture. It is noteworthy that all the authenticated names belong to the eastern and southern coasts and that the names on the northern and western coasts are still names and nothing more. This shows that Ptolemy's information came from sea-going traders. The northern and western coasts of Ireland are among the most stormy in the world and must have been avoided in those days by ocean-going craft. Ptolemy names several estuaries, and from Irish writings we know that in early times estuaries were the favourite havens. Ships could run in by the main channel and could be grounded without injury on the sandy tidal banks. Several "cities" are likewise named by Ptolemy. These, no doubt, were places of assembly or royal towns—"oppida," like Tara and Emania. None of them can be identified with any approach to certainty. Two bear the name *Regia polis*, and this I think is taken from Latin, meaning "royal city."

On Ptolemy's description are based one or two learned fancies which may almost be said to have become popular. One of these is that the ancient name of Dublin is Eblana. Ptolemy places a people named Eblani on the eastern side of Ireland and assigns them a city which he calls by their name, *Eblana polis*. This cannot be Dublin, for no trace has been found in Irish records or tradition of anything approaching in character to a city on the site occupied by Dublin until the Norsemen fortified themselves here in 841. We cannot give the name of either record or tradition to a fabulous poem

appended to the Book of Rights, a poem which relates how St. Patrick visited and blessed the Norsemen of Dublin. The poem has this value historically, that it shows how far some of our medieval writers were ready to go in the audacity of their invention.

The location which Ptolemy indicates for the Eblani and their city is certainly farther north than Dublin, probably on the coast of Louth. As Ptolemy's information was derived through traders, it is not unlikely that some of the places which he calls cities were ancient places of assembly. From the poem on the Fair or Assembly of Carman, we know that these were places of resort for traders from the Mediterranean who brought with them "gold and precious cloth" in exchange for products of the country. No doubt they timed their visits for the periodical assemblies, and from the same poem on the Fair of Carman and from other documents we also know that during the time of assembly the place of assembly bore the aspect of a city. In it at those times there was a great concourse of people of all orders; there was a royal court; a kind of parliament; many sorts of public entertainment; and a general market. Somewhere about the middle of County Louth one of these assemblies used to be held. It is called Oenach Descirt Maige "the Assembly of the South of the Plain"—probably the Plain of Muirtheimhne in the district of Dundalk. This place of assembly may have been the city of the Eblani named by Ptolemy, but the name itself has not been traced in Irish writings. Dublin lay almost certainly in the terri-

tory of the Manapii or of the Cauci, the two Germano-Belgic colonies about which I have spoken in the second of these lectures.

Another place of note which has taken its modern name straight out of Ptolemy's description is the sweet Vale of Ovoca. A few years ago, a lively controversy about the name Ovoca was carried on by correspondence in a Dublin newspaper. One of the disputants undertook to show that the name consisted of two Gaelic words and meant "shadowy river." The fact is that the river called Ovoca received the name in quite modern times from some resident or proprietor who had a moderate taste for the classics. He found the name in Ptolemy "Ὀβόκα ποταμου ἐκβολαὶ," the mouth of the river Oboca. It is one of the few river-mouths in Ireland named by Ptolemy, and must have been known to traders as a haven. The modern name Ovōca is Ptolemy's Obŏka mispronounced and does not belong to Irish tradition.

Pliny names several islands between Ireland and Britain, one of which he calls Andros. It seems to be the same place that Ptolemy calls Adros. I venture the suggestion that the proper form is Antros or Antron. At the mouth of the Garonne there was an island which bore the name Antros in the time of Pomponius Mela. Its modern name has become widely known as the name of its chief product, Médoc. In the river Loire, there was also an island named Antron, which became the site of a monastery and is now called Indre. Antros or Antron becomes 'Edar in Irish, and 'Edar is the

Irish name of the Howth peninsula. Our forefathers use the terms for island as the names of peninsulas also, for example, Inis Eoghain and Islandmagee, just as they applied the term *loch* indifferently to an inland lake and to an inlet of the sea. In our ancient tales, Howth harbour is one of the most noted and most frequented of Irish havens, and so it is not unlikely to have received notice in Ptolemy's description.

Our next notice of Ireland is written by Solinus, about A.D. 200. He begins by repeating in other words what was already said by Mela: "Hibernia is barbarous in the manner of living of its inhabitants, but is so rich in pasture that the cattle, if they be not kept now and then from grazing, are put in danger from over-eating. There are no snakes." So we see that Solinus, writing two centuries and a half before St. Patrick's time, has robbed our national saint of one of his traditional glories. He is not the only one to blame. One of the Fenian lays tells how Fionn mac Cumhaill cleared the island of all serpents. Even Fionn cannot be allowed the credit without question, for it is evident there there were no snakes in Ireland when the Fir Bolg supplied the Eastern World with Irish earth to protect cities from these venomous reptiles. Solinus goes on to say: "Birds are rare. The nation is inhospitable and warlike. The victors in combat smear their faces with the blood of their slain enemies. They make no difference between things lawful and unlawful. There is not a bee anywhere, and if anyone scatters dust or gravel from Ireland

among beehives, the swarms will desert their combs." Here we have another variety of the snake-story. Possibly Solinus, in his reading, mistook the word *aspis*, the name of a kind of snake, for *apis*, "a bee," and adjusted the popular legend about the virtue of Irish earth to suit his mistake. "The sea," he continues, "which flows between this island and Britain is billowy and restless and throughout the whole year it is navigable only during very few days." Here perhaps we have the current explanation of Ireland's immunity from invasion by the Romans. Ireland, at all events, was still a country about which the Latin world was ready to accept travellers' tales from the untravelled.

The Irish appear in a new role, that of invaders of Britain, in a panegyric of the emperor Constantius Chlorus, written in A.D. 297. The same document and passage contains the earliest known mention of the Picts by that name. "The Britons," says the panegyric, "even then an uncivilised nation and accustomed to no enemies except the Picts and the Irish [Hiberni], still half-naked, readily yielded to the Roman arms and standards." In my last lecture, I have suggested that the overthrow of the old Ulster kingdom is the explanation of the later prominence of the Picts in eastern Ulster. The sudden emergence of the Picts of Britain as a war-like and aggressive people at the close of the third century is susceptible of a similar explanation. Under the Ulster kingdom, the Picts were subject to the Ulaidh. As the Ulaidh declined in power,

the Picts became relatively prominent. So in Britain, before the Roman conquests, the Picts, I suggest, were subject to the Celts. The name Calédones or Calédonii, belonging to the principal people of southern Scotland during the early times of the Roman occupation of Britain, is a Celtic name. It is formed by adding a very usual termination to the Celtic adjective *caledos*, meaning "hard" or "hardy." Calédos was in fairly frequent use as a Celtic personal name. Seven instances are quoted by Holder from inscriptions. It is found in Irish, *e.g.*, in the term *caladcholg*, "a hard sword." It is the common Irish word for a landing-place from boats, originally no doubt having been applied to firm ground, as distinguished from swampy ground, on the banks of a river, and in this sense it has passed into Anglo-Irish vocabulary in the form "callow"—the "callows" of the Shannon. That the Caledonii did not belong to the old dark-complexioned population is the testimony of Tacitus, who says: "The reddish hair of the inhabitants of Caledonia and their large limbs indicate a Germanic origin." That this Celtic people at one time held sway in a region afterwards dominated by the Picts is witnessed by the place-name Dunkeld in Perthshire. The older Gaelic name is Dún Cailden, *i.e.*, Dunon Caledonon, the stronghold of the Caledones. The Celts, who naturally would have been strongest in Lowland Scotland, were so weakened there, I suggest, by the Roman power, that they could no longer maintain their predominance over the Pictish population of the Highlands, and so, towards the close of the third

century, the Picts emerge as new and formidable adversaries of Roman Britain on its northern frontier.

In the fourth century, the Irish are named by a new name in Latin writings. The earliest known instance of this name, Scotti, Scots, is found in a passage of the historian Ammianus with reference to the events of the year 360. "In that year," he writes, "the raids of the Scots and Picts, wild nations, had broken the agreed peace in the British provinces and were devastating the places near the frontier; terror was involving the provinces worn out by the accumulation of past defeats; the emperor, passing the winter at Paris and harassed by anxieties from one side and another, was afraid to go to the relief of his subjects across the sea. lest he might leave Gaul without a ruler a prey to the Alamanni, who were already stirred up to cruelty and war." In this single passage a great deal is implied. We see the Western Empire now beginning to totter, its ruler's conduct shaped no longer by hope of conquest but by fear of disaster. We learn that on the British northern frontier some sort of terms had previously been made with the Picts and Scots, who were the aggressive party. We learn the manner of their warfare, which is similar to that of the Norsemen during the first half-century of their wars in Ireland. They make plundering raids across the frontier, not in small parties but in considerable force, defeating again and again the local defences, and no doubt carrying off booty and captives. It was in one of these raids, a few years

after the date above referred to, that the boy Patrick was carried off and sold into slavery in Ireland.

In the year 365, Ammianus further records that "the Picts and Saxons and Scots and Atecotti harassed the Britons with continual afflictions." In 368, "the Picts, divided into two nations, Dicalydones and Verturiones, and also the Atecotti, a warlike nation of men, and the Scots, roving here and there, did many devastations." Later on, the writer of a panegyric on the emperor Theodosius asks, "shall I tell of the Scot driven back to his swamps?" And the poet Claudian, in a eulogy of the emperor Honorius, sings: "He has tamed the active Moors and the Picts, whose name is no nickname, and the Scot with wandering dagger he has followed up, breaking the waves of the far north with daring oars"; and again, "Ice-cold Ireland has mourned the heaped-up corpses of her Scots." Praising the Roman general Stilicho, Claudian says: "The Scot set all Ireland in motion"; and later, referring to Stilicho's muster against the Goths in the year 416, he writes: "Came also the legion that protected the furthest bounds of Britain, that bridled the cruel Scot and scanned the lifeless face of the dying Pict tattooed with iron point."

In all these writings, from the first mention of the name Scots down to the fall of the Western Empire in the fifth century, the Scots are Irish raiders of Roman Britain. Whitley Stokes took the name Scottus to be cognate with certain Slavonic and Germanic words and to mean "master" or "possessor." But why should a people who until

the fourth century were named Iverni or Hiberni acquire in the fourth century a new name meaning "masters" or "possessors"? It is not in the quality of possessors that they appear in the records of the time, but rather in the quality of dispossessors. Raiding, fighting, wandering, wasting, these are the occupations of the Scots in that age; and if they acquired a new name, it is to these occupations that we might expect the new name to have reference. Therefore, though it may appear audacious on my part, I venture on a different explanation.

A gloss on the name of St. Scoithín in the Festilogy of Oengus says that he was named Scoithín *ar in scothad imdechta dognid .i. dul do Ruain i n-oenlo ocus toidecht uathi i n-oenló aile*, "from the *scothadh* of travelling that he practised, namely, going [from Ireland] to Rome in a single day and returning thence [to Ireland] in another single day." The verb *scothaim* or *scaithim* has a group of meanings all signifying a rapid cutting or striking movement. Dictionaries give the meanings "I lop, prune, cut off, strip, destroy disperse, scutch [flax], beat a sheaf of corn to make it shed its grain." *Scothbhualadh* means a light threshing; *scoithneán*, a sieve for winnowing grain. *Scottus*, then, in this view, was originally a common noun meaning a raider or reaver, a depredator who worked by rapid incursions and retirements. It was probably a Gaulish word, for its earliest known use is in various inscriptions of Roman Gaul, in which it is used as a personal name. For example, an inscription of the year 224 records a votive offering by Marcus Quintius Florentinus

and others, the children of Caius Quintius Scottus. Here Scottus is the distinctive byname of the father and is not found in the names of his children.

The old story about promiscuous marriages, which in Cæsar's time was told of the Britons, and later on, when Britain became better known to the Romans, was told of the islands of western Scotland, continued until the fifth century to be told of the Irish, who, like the Hebrideans, dwelt beyond the bounds of the Empire. St. Jerome writes that "the Scotti and Atecotti, in the manner of Plato's Republic, have wives promiscuously and children in common"; and again, "the nation of the Scotti do not marry wives of their own; as if they had read Plato's Republic and adopted the example of Cato, no wife among them belongs to a particular husband; but each according to his pleasure they live without restraint, as cattle live." There is no mention of these evil customs a half-century later when Saint Patrick tells how he won over the Scots and their children from Paganism, and the oldest traditions show that the pagan Irish followed the law of monogamy with as much fidelity as did the ancient Greeks and Romans. St. Jerome tells another story, this time on his own direct testimony: "In my early youth in Gaul I have myself seen the Scots, a Britannic nation, feeding on human flesh, and, when they might find herds of swine and cattle through the forests, [I have known them] to be wont to cut off the hips of shepherds and the breasts of women, and to regard these as the only delicacies of their food." Instead of Scotti, some texts of

Saint Jerome have Atecotti in this place. It matters little, for all agree in adding the words *gentem Britannicam* "a Britannic nation." We have seen that the Atecotti were associated with the Scotti in raiding Roman Britain, and we must come later to the question, who were the Atecotti. St. Jerome's testimony is valuable on the point that these invaders of Roman Britain, whether Scotti or Atecotti, also roved about Gaul. We may take it that there were bands of them in the woods, in which he tells us they might have found swine and cattle to provide them with food, had it not been for their barbarous preference for special cuts of shepherd and shepherdess. He states that he was a boy at the time (*adolescentulus*). He does not say that he saw the barbarians in the act of catching and killing a shepherd or a shepherdess, and we may be certain that he did not, otherwise he would not have stayed on to see the preparation and consumption of the tit-bits. It has been suggested that he was probably accompanied by a very wise elderly woman who told him, as a precaution, the sort of people these roving banditti were, and that his childish imagination confirmed the tale. He may have seen the wandering islanders feasting round their fire in the forest, but how did he contrive to identify the viands? Once more, let it be said that tradition is old enough and history reaches far enough back to assure us that cannibalism, like promiscuous polygamy, was no custom of the inhabitants of Ireland or of Britain in the fourth century of the Christian era.

We have seen that Latin writers of this period make mention of the Atecotti, usually in conjunction with the Scotti. Some have assumed that the Atecotti were a branch of the Picts. So far as positive evidence goes, it is against this assumption. Ammianus speaks of the Picts, subdivided into two nations, Dicalydones and Verturiones, and then adds that "the Atecotti, a warlike nation," and the Scotti, were engaged with these in the work of devastation. This implies that the Atecotti, like the Scotti, were distinct from the Picts.

A verbal resemblance in the names led some Irish writers, from the close of the eighteenth century down to O'Curry, to identify the Atecotti with the Irish Aithech-thuatha, the ancient Rent-paying communities referred to in my third lecture. I do not think that the philologists will sanction the identification so far as it is based on verbal resemblance. The name Atecotti has not been found in any form in the native records of Ireland or Britain as the name of any nation or sub-nation or in the topography of either island. Nevertheless contemporary evidence during the second half of the fourth century shows that not only on the frontier of Roman Britain but also on the Continent there was a numerous and warlike collection of men known by this name. As in the case of the name Scotti, the conclusion I would draw is that Atecotti was a name for a general class of men not for a particular nation, tribe, or political community. The name, in its best authenticated form, is a Celtic word, consisting of the adjective *cottos* preceded by the prefix *ate*. *Cottos*

means " old," or " ancient." The prefix *ate*, which becomes *aith* or *ath* in Irish of the MS. period, means "back " or " again," like the Latin *re*, and like this, too, it often has a strengthening or intensifying force. Thus, Atecotti may be taken to mean the very ancient, the primitive, the pristine folk; and so it is explained by Whitley Stokes. Who then were these very ancient people who were associated with the Scotti and were not identified with the Picts? We are reminded at once of the Irish traditions of non-Gaelic and pre-Gaelic communities which formed the main fighting strength of the kings of North Leinster and South Leinster, and of the non-Gaelic origin ascribed to Cú Chulainn, Fear Diadh, and to the kindred of Fionn mac Cumhaill and of Goll mac Morna. Of course, on this point we are far from complete certainty, but the probability, in my opinion, is that, when the Irish went to war in the fourth century, they still adhered to the politico-social distinction between the Gaelic ascendancy and the conquered plebeian race, and that this was the distinction between the Scotti and the Atecotti. The adjective *cottos* does not appear to belong to the vocabulary of Irish, but it is found in the various Brittanic dialects and was a frequent element in Gaulish nomenclature. The Atecotti, therefore, probably received their name not in Ireland but in Britain or Gaul. The view I put forward reaches, but by a different path, a similar conclusion to that adopted by the Irish writers who sought to identify the Atecotti by name with the plebeian communities of ancient Ireland, the Aitheach-thuatha,

Contact with the Roman military system reacted on the domestic condition of Ireland. To this cause we may ascribe the origin of the Fiana as a definite military organisation at a definite period. The word *fian* is collective, signifying a band of fighting men, not merely a band of men called out upon occasion for military service, but a permanent fighting force. From it is derived *feindid*, *feinnidh*, a professional soldier. Normally, the ancient nations depended in warfare on their citizen soldiers who in time of peace were engaged in the works of peace. The great imperial states, for their plans of conquest and dominion, or for the protection of their artificial realms, relied on standing armies. In the stories of the Ulster cycle, though, as we have seen, there are certain castes or communities with a special tradition of warlike service and efficiency, there does not seem to be any permanent military organisation. The cycle of the Fiana, on the contrary, is concerned with fighting men whose principal occupation is warfare. The two epic traditions are quite distinct. Chariot-fighting is characteristic of the Ulster tales. The Fiana fight on foot. The time to which the Fiana belong is the time of the conquests made by the Connacht kings in North Leinster, the time of Conn, Art, Cormac, and Cairbre Lifeachar—roughly speaking, the third century of the Christian era. During that century, the Britons were "accustomed to war with Irish enemies," and the Irish therefore had opportunities of learning something of the Roman manner of warfare and military organisation. Again, to the third century and later belong those great

earthen frontier walls in Ireland spoken of in the foregoing lecture. The erection of these walls, we may well believe, was inspired by acquaintance with the Roman frontier fortifications in northern Britain, constructed in the second century and in the early part of the third century.

Accustomed to military life, numbers of the Scotti and Atecotti took service under Roman commanders, especially under Stilicho, who enlisted troops wherever he could raise them to defend the Empire against the Goths. The time was during the last years of the fourth century and the opening years of the fifth. A number of Latin inscriptions on the Continent bear witness to the existence, in the later days of the Western Empire, of a military force in the Imperial service under the name of Primi Scotti—"the First Scots." The majority of these inscriptions are found near the ancient frontier between the Roman Empire and western Germany, showing that the Scots or Irish were engaged to defend the line of the Rhine against the Germans. A few of the inscriptions are found in the interior of Roman Gaul.

About the same time, under the emperor Honorius and his general Stilicho, a number of distinct bodies —cohorts or regiments—of the Atecotti served in the Imperial armies. The military records known as *Notitiae Dignitatum* have mention of the following forces: Atecotti seniores; Atecotti juniores; Atecotti Honoriani seniores; Atecotti Honoriani juniores; and Atecotti Gallicani juniores; to which by implication we must add Atecotti Gallicani seniores. All

these were serving in the Western Empire, and in addition to these there was a body called simply Atecotti serving in the Eastern Empire. Those in the west formed part of a force which included also Moors, Germans, and others drawn from countries outside of the Empire. The general name for these troops appears to have been Honoriani, from the emperor Honorius in whose service they were enlisted. The chief military task of the Roman armies under Honorius was to resist the Goths who were threatening to overrun his dominions. The Spanish historian Orosius, who lived in Spain at that time, calls the barbarian forces of Honorius the Honoriaci, *i.e.*, he substitutes a Celtic form for the Latin Honoriani. (St. Patrick, a little later, uses a similar Celtic form Hiberionaci, instead of the usual Latin name Hiberni, for the Irish.) In 409, the year before the capture of Rome by the Goths under Alaric, the German nations of the Suevi, Vandals, and Alans overran southern Gaul as far as the Spanish borders. The passes of the Pyrenees were held at this time by the Honoriani. Orosius says that, on the approach of the Germans, the Honoriani in the Pyrenees made common cause with them, and shared with them in the invasion of Spain and the partition of the conquered territory He adds that the Honorians were more clement than the Germans towards the conquered people, and extended some degree of protection and assistance to them. This conquest was of short duration. A few years later the Goths in turn invaded Spain and established a Gothic kingdom over it.

These events belong to a period for which Ireland

has no contemporary documents of history, but for which, as it borders on the more strictly historical period, Irish traditions have their highest validity in evidence. The testimony of native tradition, as we might expect, is in accord with that of external history.

The third and fourth centuries of the Christian era were a time in which nearly all the peoples of Europe outside of the Roman Empire were, so to speak, on the march with arms in their hands. At the beginning of the Christian era and before it, we have seen that this state of unrest already pervaded the Celts and Germans of Mid-Europe. A few centuries earlier still, the Celts almost alone are found in this condition of warlike mobility; for the radiation of the Celtic migratory movements in every direction—southward into Italy, westward into Gaul, Spain, Britain, and Ireland, northward into the Baltic basin, and eastward along the Danube valley and into Asia Minor—is evidence that, unlike the movements which led to the break-up of the Western Empire, the earlier Celtic migrations were not accompanied by pressure from other moving populations on their borders.

I have ascribed the early expansion of the Celts to iron. The possession of iron had a two-fold effect. The natural condition of the greater part of Europe is forest. If man were absent or idle-handed, nearly all Europe in a few generations would revert to the forest state. To clear the land of woods, or even to prevent the fresh growth of woods after clearance, the implements of the Stone Age, Early and Late,

cannot have been effective. Even let us suppose that large clearances could have been made by burning, at once the thickets would again spring up, and under their protection the forest trees. Nor can the possession of bronze have sufficed to subdue the natural tendency towards forest. Bronze, in the Bronze Age, was not the industrial material of the many; it belonged to the privileged few who were not hewers of wood. Iron, when it came, introduced an industrial revolution relatively greater than that which has been introduced in modern times by the steam-engine. Once people knew how to work it, iron was abundant enough to be in the hands of every worker. Iron became and has ever since remained the sole master of growing wood. With the conquest of the forests came a great extension of tillage. Iron not only cleared fertile tracts but tilled them more rapidly and deeply than was possible with the wooden spade which, as the old Irish copper-mines have taught us, was the digging implement of the Bronze Age. Thus food became abundant, and with it a density of population which, before iron, was possible only in fertile and forestless regions like the flood areas of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Road-making, too, progressed, and the use of vehicles. As iron furnished the many with better implements of work, it furnished them also with better implements of war. An overflowing population and war-like arms for all—here we have the conditions for migratory conquest. On these conditions the Celtic migrations were based. The spread of these conditions to the Germans led to the later Germanic

expansion, and their further spread brought about the Slavonic and Turanian migrations which drove the Germans down upon the subject peoples of Rome, peoples whose power of resistance and will to defend themselves had been already broken by that Roman policy so frankly described by Tacitus.

Just as the universal subjection of science and invention to the purposes of warfare has reduced Europe to its present condition, so the universal possession of iron made Europe in the third and fourth centuries a scene of universal war. Though Ireland was fortunately untouched by the great migratory movements of the Continent in that age, these movements reacted on Ireland by weakening the neighbouring provinces of the Empire.

The raids on Britain and Gaul for booty and captives—raids from which, as I have argued, the Irish got their new name of Scots—were followed by Irish settlements on various points of the British coast. The conquest of eastern Meath or Bregia by the kings of Connacht and Uisneach forced a part of the population to migrate, and one body of the migrants settled in Demetia, in the south of Wales. We can safely place the conquest of Bregia in the second half of the third century, but it does not follow that the settlement in Wales was made at the same time, for the story of the Déisi migration makes it appear that the expelled population remained for many years in Leinster before the settlement in Munster. There may have been a similar delay before their kindred crossed over to Wales.

In south-western Britain, there was also an Irish

colony, apparently from Munster and headed by princes of the Eoghanacht dynasty which displaced the earlier line of the Iverni. Cormac's Glossary mentions in the Cornish region a stronghold named Dinn Map Lethan. This name, a mixture of Cymric and Gaelic, means the fortress of the Sons of Lethan. The Ui Liatháin, or descendants of Liathán, were one of the principal septs of the Eoghanachta, and their territory adjoined the Munster coast in the district immediately to the west of the Déisi.

The most noted and most permanent of the Irish settlements in Britain was that of Argyleshire and the adjoining islands. The kings of Dál Riada, according to the Annals of Tigernach, did not take up their abode in that region until far on in the fifth century, A.D. 470. This, however, does not imply that the Irish migration to Scotland began at that time. It rather means that the Irish colonies of Argyleshire and the islands became subject at that time to the kings of the nearest territory in Ireland. There is no record known to me of the Irish migration to Galloway, the south-western angle of the Scottish mainland, a region formerly occupied by the Picts. Though the Norsemen settled in Galloway in a later age, a glance at the map will show that the place-names of Galloway are almost as purely Gaelic as those of any part of Ireland. Gaelic was the prevalent language of Galloway in the sixteenth century and continued to be spoken there in the eighteenth century.

These Gaelic settlements on the western seaboard of Britain appeared to Sir John Rhys to be the

remnants of a Gaelic population which, he thought, preceded the British or Brythonic conquest.

There are stories of the Fiana and even of the heroes of the earlier Ulster cycle that reflect in tradition those raids on Britain which are recorded in Latin writings. As we approach the borderland of documentary history, the evidences are still more definite. The death of Niall of the Nine Hostages, king of Ireland, is assigned to the year 404. At the time of his death, he was at the head of an expedition in the English Channel, and he was slain on board ship by a Leinster prince. He was succeeded by his brother's son Nath-'I, commonly called Dathi in later writings. Nath-'I in turn met his death at the head of an oversea expedition in the year 429. He is said to have been killed by lightning in the Alps. At this time, the Roman Empire was making its final struggle in Gaul under Aetius "the last of the Romans," against the Visigoths who held all the southern parts from Italy to the Bay of Biscay, and the Franks and Burgundians who had occupied the parts along the Rhine. It does not seem likely that an Irish raid, in these circumstances, could reach the Alps. nor can we well imagine what it could expect to gain by such an inroad. The Alps are probably a circumstantial ornament to the story, and we may content ourselves with the main point that this Irish king, three years before St. Patrick's mission began, led a raiding expedition to Gaul and met his death there. The story contains an additional proof that the kings of Ireland, who reigned in Tara in those days,

represented the ancient dynasty of Connacht. The remains of Nath-'I were brought back to Ireland and laid to rest in the ancient pagan cemetery of Cruachain, beside the royal burg of the Connacht kings. It was the old line of the kings of Cruachain that had now become kings of Ireland seated in Tara. There is another interesting piece of evidence on this point which did not escape the notice of the late Father Hogan. Loeguire, son of Niall, succeeded his cousin Nath-'I as king of Ireland, and was reigning at Tara when St. Patrick began his missionary work. But it was at Cruachain and not at Tara that St. Patrick met and baptised the daughters of Loeguire. Tara, in fact, was the official seat of the monarchy, but Cruachain in Connacht was still the real home of the kings of Tara.

The condition of Europe at this time, the first half of the fifth century, is terrible to contemplate, and many must have thought that the ancient civilisation was at an end. The Roman legions had abandoned Britain a prey to the Picts, the Scots, and the north-western Germans. Gaul and Spain were in the hands of the Franks, Burgundians, Visigoths, Alans, Suevi, and Vandals. Genseric, king of the Vandals, had overrun the opulent Roman province of Africa, which never afterwards recovered its ancient prosperity, and the greatest intellect of the time, St. Augustine, passed away in his episcopal city while the Vandals were besieging it. Rome itself was twice captured and sacked, first by the Goths and afterwards by the Vandals.

Attila, the Scourge of God, led immense armies from one end of Europe to the other, and boasted that where his horse had trodden the grass grew no more. St. Patrick, in his Confession, relates that after his escape from captivity in Ireland he and his companions travelled for thirty days on the Continent through an unpeopled wilderness. It seems a miracle that hope and courage could have survived in any mind. Yet the spirit of peace and gentleness and mercy was stronger than all the violence and bloodthirst of all the nations. Some have complained that St. Patrick, in his simple narrative, tells little but his own heart, but his Confession is one of the great documents of history, and explains to us better than all the historians how barbarism was tamed and civilisation saved. Imagine a young lad of tender years, son of a Roman citizen, torn away by fierce raiders from his parents and people, no doubt amid scenes of bloodshed and ruin, and sold into slavery among strangers; kept for years, the despised chattel of a petty chieftain, herding flocks in a bleak land of bog and forest. Think that the ruling sentiment that grew out of this pitiful experience was one of boundless love and devotion towards the people that had done him such terrible wrongs, so that when he had regained his freedom by flight, in nightly visions he heard their voices calling him back to them and freely and eagerly made up his mind to spend himself altogether in their service. It was this spirit that subdued the ferocity of fierce plundering rulers and warlike peoples. The Irish ceased from that time to be a

predatory nation. Two centuries later, the king of the Northumbrian Angles invaded and devastated a part of eastern Ireland. His own subject, the Venerable Bede, denounces this violence done to "a harmless people who have never injured the English," and finds a just retribution in the misfortunes that afterwards befel the king and the Northumbrian power.

In St. Patrick's time, the headship of Tara was not yet firmly fixed in the national tradition. He founded various churches in the neighbourhood of Tara. Tirechan names eight of them. To none of these he attached the primacy, but to the church he founded close by the ancient capital of Ulster. The story of this foundation illustrates another trait of Patrick's character besides his wonderful charity. The nobleman, Dáire, from whom he asked the land for his church, refused the site that Patrick wished and gave another instead. He afterwards presented Patrick with a fine vessel of bronze. Patrick said simply "Gratias agimus." This curtness displeased the magnate, so that he sent again and took away the gift. Patrick again said, "Gratias agimus." Hearing this, Dáire came in person and restored the vessel to Patrick and said: "Thou must have thy vessel of bronze, for thou art a steadfast and unchangeable man. And moreover that piece of land for which thou once didst ask me, I give to thee with all my rights in it, and dwell thou in it." And that, says the ancient life, is the city which now is named Armagh.

VI. INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY AND LETTERS

IN our early literature there are many traces of an abiding tradition that already before St. Patrick's mission there were Christians and small Christian communities here and there in Ireland. Some of the statements, especially as to the founders of certain sees, have been discredited, being imputed to a desire to make out that these sees, alleged to have been founded before St. Patrick's time, were therefore independent of the jurisdiction and claims of Armagh, especially of the temporal claims for revenue. It was claimed in particular for St. Ailbhe and St. Iubhar, of the see of Emly, St. Declan of Ardmore, and St. Ciarán of Saighir that they were already bishops in St. Patrick's time. These things are stated in documents in which other things are said that cannot be reconciled with historical fact. The date of St. Iubhar's death, according to the Annals of Ulster, was 500, 501, or 504; of St. Ailbhe's, 534, or 542; and SS. Ciarán and Declan are both said to have lived into the sixth century. Saint Iubhar appears to have been the earliest of them and there is evidence that he received episcopal consecration at the hands of St. Patrick. The case, however, does not rest wholly or mainly on such unstable premises.

The genealogists of Corcu Loegdae, or Dáirine, claim that the people of that state were the first in Ireland to receive Christianity; and the claim at all events cannot be dismissed on the ground of improbability. The diocese of Ross appears to represent the extent of this little state in the twelfth century, but in earlier times its territory covered a much larger area. Dwelling around several good havens, which were most favourably situated in relation to the old Atlantic trade route, the people were always a sea-going people. We read of an O'Driscoll at the head of his fleet attacking the English of Waterford. One of their chiefs takes his distinctive byname from Gascony, another from Bordeaux. Thomas Davis's spirited ballad on the Sack of Baltimore brings home to our minds how direct hostile relation could exist between this region and the Mediterranean; and where such hostile relations were possible, trade relations may be taken as normal. It is by no means unlikely, then, that where the Crescent could come on pirate galleys from Algiers, the Cross might well have come in some early merchant ship from the Loire or the Garonne.

St. Patrick himself, in his Confession, seems to testify by implication to the existence not merely of individual Christians but of Christian communities with their clergy in and before his time in Ireland. "For your sake," he writes, "I have faced many dangers, going even to the limits of the land where no one was before me, and whither no one had yet come to baptise or ordain clergy

or confirm the faithful." This surely implies that there were places in Ireland, not in the remoter parts, places where some had come before Patrick and had performed the purely episcopal functions of ordination and confirmation.

More definite still is the evidence of Prosper's Chronicle—direct testimony, for the chronicler was in Rome at the time. Under the year 431, the chronicle has this entry: "To the Scots believing in Christ, having been ordained by Pope Celestine, Palladius is sent as first bishop." The natural interpretation of this statement, I think, is that some Irish Christians sent a request to Rome to have a bishop sent to them. The mission was considered an important one, for Palladius, before his consecration as bishop, held a high ecclesiastical office at Rome. He had also interested himself in the religious concerns of Britain, having induced Pope Celestine two years earlier to send a special mission to Britain to counteract the teachings of a Pelagian bishop. In another work, St. Prosper refers to these two missions together. Pope Celestine, he writes, "while he laboured to keep the Roman island (*i.e.* Britain) Catholic, also, by ordaining a bishop for the Scots, made the barbarous island Christian"—barbarous meaning external to the Roman Empire. Even this does not necessarily imply that before Palladius there were no bishops in Ireland, but it does imply that these particular "Irish believing in Christ," to whom Palladius was sent, had no bishop in communion with Rome.

Pelagius, the author of the Pelagian heresy, was,

according to St. Jerome, a man " of the Irish nation, from the vicinity of the Britons," and St. Jerome again, in his vigorous style, speaks of Pelagius as one " swelled out with the porridge of the Irish." Other contemporary witnesses say that Pelagius was a Briton. This leaves us in doubt, for, on the one hand, these may have applied the term Briton to anyone from any part of the Pretanic islands, and on the other hand, St. Jerome's language about Pelagius is the language of rhetorical depreciation, and from what I have quoted from him in the foregoing lecture, we may perhaps judge that by calling Pelagius a Scot, he thought the more effectually to discredit him. The known career of Pelagius lies between the years 398 and 418. One thing comes out clearly enough from the contemptuous phrase—the Irish were known abroad in St. Jerome's time as eaters of porridge.

The late Professor Zimmer, finding a somewhat obscure early reference to the flight of learned people from Gaul during the Gothic and Frankish invasions and to their finding a place of refuge in another country, founded on this an interesting theory regarding the early stages of Christianity and letters in Ireland. It was in Ireland, he contends, that the refugees found a home, for Ireland was the only land in Western Europe that escaped the Germanic invasions. To Ireland they brought with them a certain devotion to the ancient literatures of Greece and Rome. The limits of date for this learned migration, according to Zimmer, are the years 419 and 507, and he holds that it actually took place

about midway between those dates, *i.e.*, about the middle of the fifth century.

To make this theory of a learned migration from Western Gaul to Ireland more easily accepted, Zimmer gives a valuable collection of facts in historical evidence, showing that there was a regular course of trade between the two countries at this time and for centuries before and after it.

Zimmer applies his theory to the explanation of certain remarkable facts. In the first place, he explains by it the pre-eminence in the knowledge of Latin and Greek that belonged in the following age to Irishmen and the pupils of Irishmen. Secondly, he explains by it the reference made by St. Patrick in his Confession to certain critics who despised his rusticity, *i.e.*, his want of a classical grounding in Latin. St. Patrick calls these critics "rhetoricians," a term which certainly seems to imply that they belonged to a professional academic set. Zimmer thinks that these "rhetoricians" were some of the learned refugees from Western Gaul. A third fact which Zimmer explains by his migration theory is the fondness of the early Irish poets and grammarians for certain artificial super-refinements of language and grammar, and in particular for the production of a learned jargon in Irish by making deliberate changes in the form of words, substituting one letter for another, and adding, transforming or removing letters or syllables. This trait, he argues, was adopted from a certain learned school of Aquitaine, who played similar tricks with Latin, and produced by such means not one but a dozen Latin jargons;

and Zimmer goes so far as to insist that the supposed Irish poet-grammarian who is named "Fercertne the Poet" was actually and personally identical with one of the chief exponents of this artificial Latinity, Virgilius Grammaticus.

The difficulties I find in accepting this theory of Zimmer are chiefly two. The first is that Zimmer, when he set out to establish a novel theory, was quite as ingenious in weaving an argument as Virgilius Grammaticus could be in concocting a Latin jargon. My second difficulty is that, if such a school of foreign Latinists existed in Ireland in St. Patrick's time, I cannot understand why neither the school itself nor any individual belonging to it is mentioned in any Irish document. St. Patrick does not say that his critics lived in Ireland.

On the other hand, in a passage which Zimmer has not noted, there is reference to a high degree of Christian learning in Ireland possibly as early as St. Patrick's time. It is in a letter on the Paschal controversy written by St. Columbanus of Bobbio within the years 595 to 600. It may be remarked that St. Columbanus writes in a remarkably pure Latin style, founded on good sound Latin teaching, and in no way reflecting the ingenuities and puerilities of the Aquitanian school. He is speaking expressly in this letter about the chronological system devised by Victorius of Aquitaine, who flourished in the middle of the fifth century. "Victorius," he writes, "was regarded with indulgence, not to say contempt, by our masters and by the ancient Irish philosophers." Here, in the last years of the sixth

century, we find an Irishman placing a higher value on the Christian learning of "ancient Irish philosophers" than on that of a noted Aquitanian scholar.

I do not propose here to deal with the life and work of St. Patrick. Let me escape with the apology made by the writer of the Irish Nennius: "It would be carrying water to a lake, to relate the wonders of Patrick to the Men of Ireland."

Let the beginnings of letters and literature in Ireland now occupy our attention. Cæsar's testimony will be remembered in regard of the Celts in Gaul: "They make use of Greek letters in almost all their affairs, both public and private." This use of the Greek alphabet is corroborated by the fact that the oldest Celtic inscriptions in Gaul are in Greek characters. The accompanying sculptures also demonstrate Greek influence. This influence radiated, no doubt, from the early Greek colony of Massilia or Massalia (Marseille) and its daughter colonies along the Mediterranean coast. It extended as far as to the Helvetii in the modern Switzerland, among whose spoils Cæsar captured a census of the entire people written out in Greek characters. On the other hand, the Cisalpine Gauls in Northern Italy used the Etruscan alphabet, from which the Roman alphabet was also in part derived, and a number of their inscriptions in the Etruscan characters have been discovered.

We can trace no such early use of the alphabet in Britain or Ireland. The earliest known use of letters in Britain appears to be in the coinage of the sons of Commius.

Tacitus has told us that the states of Britain were governed, not by kings, but by nobles and factions—just as Rome was governed in the later centuries of the Republic. In Gaul also there were no kings. It is interesting to examine how, in the period between the temporary invasions of Britain by Julius Cæsar and the permanent Roman conquest of southern Britain about a century later, a people of the southern seaboard happen to have kings, and these kings happen to have a coinage inscribed after the Roman fashion.

One of the Belgic States that had an offshoot in Britain was that of the Atrebates close to the Straits of Dover. The town of Arras preserves their name. In Britain, they were settled in the valley of the Thames and their chief place was Calleva, now Silchester in the north of Hampshire. Cæsar took a special interest in the Atrebates, perhaps for the two reasons, that their territory was so near to Britain and that a part of their people were settled in Britain. In the early and insecure stages of his conquest of Gaul, he did not find it practicable to establish at once the Roman form of government. Instead he adopted a device which had already succeeded in the case of the Galatian republic in Asia. The Romans changed Galatia into a monarchy under a Galatian king Deiotaros, believing that they would secure their own authority more effectually by making one of the Galatians, so to speak, their chief policeman. A son and grandson of Deiotaros succeeded him as kings, and after these Augustus abolished this appearance of autonomy and made

Galatia a Roman province under Roman governors. Cæsar, having overcome the resistance of the Atrebates on the Continent, appointed one of themselves, Commius, a noble of great influence, to be their king. Commius, he tells us, was a man both courageous and politic, and he considered him loyal. He afterwards used Commius as his intermediary in treating with the Britons, and through him received the submission of Cassivellaunus, whom the Britons had chosen to command their forces. After this service, Cæsar freed Commius from tribute, restored the rights and laws of his people and gave him sovereignty also over the Morini, a neighbouring state on the Belgic seaboard. In the sixth year of Cæsar's command, B.C. 53, a wide revolt of the Gallic states took place, and this time Commius took the side of his fellow-countrymen and was one of the four chiefs to whom they committed the principal charge of the war. In the suppression of the revolt, Commius was one of the last to hold out. He called in the help of the Germans, and when all failed, he took refuge among the Germans. Hirtius, the continuator of Cæsar's narrative, relates how Labienus, one of Cæsar's generals, considered that, in view of the disloyalty of Commius and his entering into conspiracy to revolt, it would be no perfidy to have him done away. Accordingly he sent one Volusenus to him in the guise of an envoy but with private instructions to have Commius murdered. The plot failed, and Commius declared that he would never again consent to speak to any Roman. He continued the war, and had the satisfaction of once

meeting and wounding the treacherous envoy Volusenus in single combat. At last he was forced to submit upon terms and to give hostages, but even in his submission he made it a condition that he would not be required to hold direct intercourse with any Roman. He seems to have taken refuge finally in Britain.

Under the rule of Commius over the Atrebates, coins were struck bearing his name in its Celtic spelling Commios, but in Roman lettering, probably about the earliest examples of the use of the Roman alphabet in northern Gaul. Three of his sons appear to have reigned as kings in southern Britain, where, as already said, a colony of their people the Atrebates was settled. Their names, Tincius (or Tincommius), Eppillus, and Verica or Virica, are on numerous coins found in the south-east and middle south of England. One of these coins bears the name of Calleva, chief place of the Atrebates in Britain, now Silchester. The coins are inscribed with Roman letters, the name of Eppillus has already exchanged a Celtic for a Latin ending in the nominative, and the letters R and F, abbreviations for the Latin *rex* and *filius*, appear on most of the coins. In this way the Latin alphabet found a foothold in Britain about the beginning of the Christian era.

No use of letters nearly so early can be traced in Ireland. When Irish traditions began to be written, the Ogham alphabet was thought to be of remote antiquity, its invention being ascribed to the eponymous god Ogma. This god is apparently identical

with the Gaulish Ogmios, a god of eloquence, about whom there is a remarkable passage in the Greek writer Lucian. In the story of Táin Bó Cuailngi, Cú Chulainn cuts a message in Ogham on a branch and sets it up in the middle of a ford for his approaching enemies to read. Nevertheless, I think that the use of Ogham characters cannot be quite as old as the Cú Chulainn period. I see two reasons for thinking so. The first is that the Ogham alphabet is based on the Latin alphabet. The second is that, if the Irish god Ogma mac Eladan ("son of science") is to be identified in any way with the Gaulish Ogmios, god of eloquence,—and it seems impossible to dissociate them—then the name of the god must have come into the Irish language at a very late date before the use of writing. Philologists tell us that, when *g* was followed by *m* in the early unrecorded stage of the Irish language, *g* disappeared, and the preceding vowel, if short, was lengthened "by compensation," as it is called. Accordingly, an ancient name *Ogmios* would be represented in early MS. Irish by *'Ome* not *Ogme*, and in later Irish by *Uama* or *Uaime* not *Oghma*.

At first sight, it may appear too much to say that the Ogham alphabet was founded on the Latin alphabet. Why, let us ask, might it not have been a quite independent invention? A little reflection will convince us that it could not have been an independent invention. There is no limit, practically, to the possible varieties of alphabet, *i.e.*, of graved or written symbols used to represent words. There are pictorial systems, and derived

from these the so-called hieroglyphics, systems in which every word has a distinct syllable, systems in which each character stands for a symbol, systems in which no vowels are written, and systems which have distinct symbols for vowels and consonants. To the last class belong the Greek and Latin alphabets. There are systems in which the long and short vowels are distinguished, for example, in Pitman's shorthand alphabet; and this is partly the case in the Greek alphabet. The Ogham alphabet belongs to the class in which there are distinct symbols for vowels and consonants. All its consonants but one are found in the Latin alphabet. Except for this one, representing the sound of *ng* in *song* or *sing*, it is content with the Latin consonants, though each of them has to express two very distinct sounds in Irish, the mute or stop sound and the spirant or "aspirate" as it is popularly called. Lastly, it has the five Latin vowels, without distinction of long or short. Hence its Latin origin is hardly open to question. Until Cæsar's time, the Greek, not the Latin, alphabet was in use among the Gauls, the nearest people to Ireland by whom writing was then used. The Ogham alphabet and the Latin alphabet differ, generally speaking, in the same respects from the Greek alphabet. The latter therefore cannot have furnished the Irish model. The conclusion is that the Ogham alphabet, based on the Latin, was devised at some time later than the introduction of the Latin alphabet into neighbouring countries, that is to say, about the beginning of the Christian era or some-

what later. It was suitable only to the purposes for which it is known or related to have been used, *i.e.*, for brief inscriptions or brief messages or statements. It was not suitable for the ordinary expression of written thought, for literature in the wide sense.

The range of the use of Ogham in inscriptions outside of Ireland corresponds to the range of Irish settlements and of Irish influence, at the time of the collapse of the Western Empire. In general the range is that of the Irish language at the time, but a number of Ogham inscriptions are also found in parts of Scotland which at that time were inhabited and ruled by the Picts. Apart from the Pictish instances, the farthest outlying Ogham that has been discovered is curiously enough found at Silchester, the ancient Calleva, the capital of the Atrebates in Britain, and the place in which the coins of the sons of Commius were struck, the coins that exhibit the earliest known use of the Roman alphabet or of any alphabet in Britain.

The dating of the extant Ogham inscriptions is a matter of very great difficulty, and the more closely I have attempted to examine them, the greater the difficulty has become. I shall only say that the latest forms of Irish names that they contain appear to be about identical in their stage of phonetic change with the earliest forms found in Irish writers, for example in the Life of St. Columba by Adamnanus who quotes from older documents—probably forms of the latter part of the sixth century. The weight of evidence, in my opinion, goes to show that the

cult of the Ogham inscriptions was mainly associated with Paganism.

The manuscript literature of Irish does not come in a line of continuity from the Ogham writing. The system of spelling in the oldest specimens of MS. Irish has its basis in a British pronunciation of Latin—that is, in Latin modified and changed as a spoken language among the Britons during the centuries of the Roman occupation. One of the tasks incidental to the work of St. Patrick and his helpers in missionary work in Ireland was to give lessons in Latin to those who were to be the future clergy of the country. Thus we read again and again that St. Patrick wrote an alphabet for this and that convert—alphabet in this case meaning a primer or possibly a book of psalms—at all events a set of lessons in Latin. It is easy to show that a similar pronunciation of Latin prevailed in the early Christian schools of Ireland and in Britain at the same time; that this pronunciation differed systematically from the Italian pronunciation; that the differences represent changes which had taken place also in the British language, though not in Irish; and that the orthography of Old and Middle Welsh and also of Old and Middle Irish was moulded by this modified British pronunciation of Latin. The peculiarities of spelling produced in this way do not appear at all in the Ogham inscriptions; and on the other hand, there are peculiarities in the orthographic system of the Ogham inscriptions which leave no trace in Irish MS. writing. The oldest Irish grammarians speak of the Ogham

method of writing as the Irish method and of the MS. method as the Latin method; and they report current sayings which show that among the early Irish Christians the use of the Irish method was regarded as profane and even tainted with impiety—meaning, beyond doubt, that it was closely associated in their minds with heathenism. On the other hand the earliest specimens of written Irish are distinctively Christian. The oldest known piece of Irish MS. writing is, or was until recently, preserved in Cambrai and is ascribed to the seventh century—but pieces as old or older exist in various transcripts.

In a paper on the Annals of Tigernach, I have shown that a chronicle of the world, written in continuation of the Chronicle of Eusebius, Jerome, and Prosper, and embodying a skeleton of Irish history, was brought to conclusion in Ireland in the year 609. From certain indications this chronicle would appear to have been commenced in the closing years of the sixth century—say between 590 and 600. Part of this chronicle is embodied in the Annals of Tigernach and in the Annals of Ulster, and extracts from it in the Annals of Innisfallen. What survives of it with relation to Ireland is the oldest known history of Ireland. From its manner of dealing with Irish affairs, I think we must conclude that even before its time, a certain body of Irish heroic literature existed in MS. and consequently that the writing of this literature had already begun in the course of the sixth century. There are other evidences that during the sixth century a blending of the old

heathen lore and learned tradition with the new Christian learning was taking place—the native schools of poets, originally druids, becoming Christian and adopting the apparatus of Christian learning. St. Columba, we are told, had a poet named Gemmán for tutor, and we may be quite certain that the friendship which Columba is said to have shown to the poets as a body in the Assembly of Druim Ceata in 575 was not extended to a class which he associated with heathenism.

Nevertheless, a good deal of specifically heathen practice and teaching was preserved, more or less covertly, among the secular poets of Ireland for centuries after St. Columba's time.

In the seventh century, writing in Irish appears to become very common, but Adamnanus, about the beginning of the eighth century, writing from the standpoint of Latin and Christian learning, still speaks of his native tongue in depreciation. This sentiment did not extend to the Irish secular school of *literati*. An old grammar of Irish, dating in part from the seventh century, speaks of Irish as a "choice language," and proclaims its superiority over other languages. In the seventh century, too, new metrical forms in Irish poetry, based on Latin hymns, make their appearance, and afterwards develop into a varied and elaborate system of metric.

Let us now return to the political side of Irish history. I have endeavoured to trace the stages by which the Pentarchy of the old heroic tales became broken up and transformed into a quite

different state of things when the early Christian period is reached. The chief agencies in this transformation were the extension of the power of the Connacht dynasty and its branches over northern Ireland, and the rise of the Eoghanacht dynasty in southern Ireland, with its seat at Cashel. The growth in power of the two ascendant dynasties, those of Tara and Cashel, is marked by a sort of colonising process. Offshoots from each dynasty are planted in authority over petty kingdoms, displacing or rather depressing the rulers previously in possession.

Something similar took place in later times under the Feudal system. In virtue of the supposed Donation of Constantine, now long recognised to have been fabulous, but accepted as genuine in the Middle Ages, the Popes claimed temporal dominion over all the islands of the ocean. In exercise of this temporal claim, Adrian IV conferred the lordship of Ireland on Henry of Anjou. But in virtue of the same supposed right, Adrian had already an immediate feudatory for Ireland in the person of the king of Ireland—Ruaidhri. Henry thus took the place of a "mean lord" or intermediate feudatory between the existing lord and the overlord. Henry himself repeated this process. He granted the lordship of Ireland to his son John, and this grant was confirmed by the Pope then reigning, Alexander III. Sir John Gilbert has pointed out that, had the issue of John's elder brothers survived, John would not have become king, and the lordship of Ireland would have been separate from and independent of the

Crown of England, and subject only to the feudal overlordship of the Pope while it lasted. The result of granting the lordship of Ireland to Henry II was that the existing possessor was depressed in rank, not dispossessed—this apart from the cession of rights which Ruaidhri made to Henry by the short-lived Treaty of Windsor.

An almost identical process was a staple part of the policy of Irish kings from the beginning of the fourth century until the middle of the sixteenth. Such lordships can be shown to have been created either by Shane O'Neill or his father Conn, acting as king of Ulster. During the whole intervening period, we can trace the same process, the creation of mean lords, in every part of Ireland under Irish kings. In most cases the new lord was a member of the king's family, a brother, a son, or other near relative. A number of very clear and noteworthy instances of this exercise of royal dominion by Irish kings took place in consequence of the Norman conquest.

Events of this kind are not recorded in the Irish annals, except in a few instances when the exercise of power was somewhat abnormal. Since we have now reached a point at which the annals begin to figure as chief witnesses, some notice of the general character of the annals will be in place. At first sight, the pages of our native chronicles appear as a sort of trackless morass to the inquirer after Irish history. The reason is this—the chroniclers hardly ever tell us anything that an Irish reader of their times could be expected to know as a matter of

course. They say almost nothing about institutions or about anything that is normal. Just as they record earthquakes, comets, eclipses, excessive frosts or floods or droughts, but say nothing about the normal course of the stars or the seasons, so, in regard of human affairs, they are silent about all that is regular or institutional, about matters of common knowledge in their time, and they are silent also, as a rule, about the institutional aspect, so to speak, of events which they relate. We are told, for example, that a certain king puts a prince of his own house to death—and that is all. From some subsidiary document we may learn that the act was a judicial act, done after trial and sentence. Or we are told that a certain king leads his forces against another king and how the battle went—but we have to consult some other source to find that the action was taken in consequence of the refusal to pay tribute according to ancient claim and precedent.

Among the subsidiary material which helps to explain the annals, and to give their events a place in historical sequence, the genealogies have the highest importance. In particular, they throw a great deal of light on the process above-mentioned, the extension of the power of dynastic families by the creation of lordships over the head of existing feudatories—to use a borrowed term.

An early instance of the process in question is found in an account quoted by O'Donovan from a MS. life of St. Greallán. Maine, he tells us, from whom the sept of Ui Maine took its name and

descent, was settled in the territory of Ui Maine by a king of Connacht in the fifth century, dispossessing the "Firbolg" king of that district. (This instance, by the way, further exemplifies the unity still subsisting at that time between the different branches of the Connacht dynasty. Maine, to whom a kingdom in Connacht was thus granted by the king of Connacht, belonged to the Oriel branch of the royal house, a branch which had settled in Ulster early in the preceding century.) When O'Donovan, or the narrative which he quotes, says that the dispossessed king was of the Fir Bolg stock, he uses the term Fir Bolg in its late and wide application. The older possessors of the territory were Picts. Moreover, they were depressed rather than dispossessed, for the descendants of the ancient rulers continued to dwell as subordinate chiefs in their old territory. The family of 'O Mainnín, called Manning in English, is one of those descended from the ancient Pictish rulers of this district, which comprised the southern part of County Roscommon and the south-eastern part of County Galway. Still earlier appropriations of this kind can be traced to the time of Niall of the Nine Hostages, his brothers and sons. The old territory of the Fir Domhnann in northern Connacht became Tír Fiachrach, "Fiachra's Land," being appropriated to Fiachra, brother of Niall, and his descendants. Another branch of Fiachra's sept become possessors of the kingdom of Aidhne, lying between Galway Bay and the old Pictish territory before-mentioned. From Bríon or Brian, another brother of Niall, is named

Tír Briúin or Brión's Land, extending over parts of the counties Roscommon, Leitrim and Cavan. Brion's sept, the Ui Briúin also obtained a territory in the district of Tuam and another territory called Umhall, around Clew Bay. From a third brother of Niall named Ailill is named Tír Ailello, "Ailill's Land," represented by the barony of Tirerrill in Co. Sligo. In like manner, various territories were appropriated to sons of Niall of the Nine Hostages. The western part of Ulster, which was not brought under conquest by the settlement of the Airghialla, and which is now represented by Donegal county, was partitioned among three sons of Niall, Conall, 'Enda, and Eoghan, and bore afterwards their names Tír Conaill, "Conall's Land"; Tír 'Enda, "Enda's Land"; and Tír Eoghain, "Eoghan's Land." It should be noted that the original Tír Eoghain was the peninsula now called Inis Eoghain. The country now called Tyrone was then a part of Oriel. This settlement of the sons of Niall in western Ulster was, however, rather by way of conquest than of grant. No element of conquest enters into the settlements of the other sons of Niall or of the septs descended from them.

Cairbre, or his sept, for we have no record by which the grant can be dated, obtained that territory in the north-eastern corner of Connacht, bordering on Ulster, which still retains his name in that of the barony of Carbury in Co. Sligo. A second territory appropriated to Cairbre or his sept was around Granard in Co. Longford. A third was on the Leinster border, and it still preserves the name

in that of the barony of Carbury in the north of Co. Kildare.

Loeguire, son of Niall, who became king of Ireland, obtained, or his near descendants obtained, a territory on the Connacht side of Loch Erne, another in Westmeath, another in East Meath or Bregia. Maine, son of Niall, obtained a territory on the east side of the Shannon; Fiachu, son of Niall, a territory in Westmeath; Ardgal, a grandson of Niall, a territory in East Meath.

It seems quite clear that no appropriations of this kind took place before the time of Niall, the close of the fourth century. Had there been earlier appropriations in Connacht or Meath, then there must have been royal septs, offshoots of the Connacht-Meath dynasty, in possession of the appropriated territories and claiming descent from earlier kings of Connacht or Meath. Nor was this claim of descent likely to be forgotten, for, as the Book of Rights shows, in each of the principal group-kingdoms, the kings whose kinship to the principal dynasty was acknowledged, were free of tribute to the principal king. The Book of Rights shows that, except the descendants of Niall and of his brothers, all the petty kingdoms of Connacht and Meath were tributary to the overkings; and the genealogies show that the ruling families of the tributary kingdoms were as a rule of quite distinct lineage from that of the overkings. The natural inference from these facts is that this process of superimposing new lords of the dominant dynastic blood over old rulers of a different lineage begins

in the time of Niall of the Nine Hostages, about A.D. 400.

Some of the petty dynasties thus created were themselves in later times subjected to the same process and reduced to a lower degree. Thus when the O'Conor family, which was itself a branch of the sept of Brión above-mentioned, acquired exclusive succession to the kingdom of Connacht, one of its branches, bearing the distinctive name of O'Conchubhair Ruadh, obtained the lordship of Cairbre in north-eastern Connacht, over the heads of the ancient lords descended from Cairbre son of Niall. In like manner, Ailill's land, Tirerrill, after having been ruled for centuries by his descendants, passed under the lordship of the families of MacDonnchadha and MacDiarmada, descendants of his brother Brión, whose line held the kingship of all Connacht. The sept of Ailill, reduced in degree, gradually passes into obscurity. About the thirteenth century, even the genealogists cease to be interested in them; and in the seventeenth century, the last genealogist of the old school, Dubhaltach Mac FirBhisigh, says that those who then remained of Ailill's race are no longer reckoned among the nobles of the territory. Let me repeat that, with the help of the genealogies, it is possible to trace this process at work in various parts of Ireland from the fifth century until the abolition of Irish law in the sixteenth century. I shall have to recur to these facts when I come to deal with the so-called "clan-system" or "tribal system," convenient terms with which some modern writers contrive to fill up

the vacuum of their knowledge in regard to the general political condition of ancient and medieval Ireland.

Breifne, under the rule of Brión's sept, was regarded as permanently annexed to Connacht. In its early extent Breifne comprised about the northern half of Co. Leitrim and the western half of Co. Cavan; these territories having been annexed from the ancient Ulster. In later times, when the O'Ruairc and O'Raghallaigh chiefs extended their power, Breifne comprised the whole of the present counties of Leitrim and Cavan.

The territories of the sons of Niall were separated by Breifne and Oriel into two groups, a north-western group and a Meath group. The north-western group of Niall's descendants are called the Northern Ui Néill, the Meath group the Southern Ui Néill. One frequently meets with the error of supposing Ui Néill to mean the O'Néills—I find it in a paper of Zimmer's published after his death. It is true that Ui Néill, as a matter of grammar, is the plural of 'O'Néill, but it is not the plural of the surname 'O'Néill in Irish usage. The sept-names with Ui prefixed belong to an earlier age than surnames like O'Neill. The surname O'Neill belongs to the descendants of Niall Glúndubh, king of Ireland, who was reigning a thousand years ago. The sept-name Ui Néill includes all the descendants in the male line of Niall of the Nine Hostages who reigned 500 years earlier.

The chief king of the Northern Ui Néill was called king of Aileach, from the prehistoric stone fortress

of Aileach near Derry, which was occupied by kings of that line as late as the tenth century. They are sometimes called kings of the Fochla, *fochla* being an old Irish word meaning the North. Their territory in the fifth century comprised the county of Donegal and possibly also Cairbre's country, the northern limb of Co. Sligo.

The eastern side of Ulster nominally constituted another chief kingdom, which was regarded as the remnant of the ancient Ulster, and so is sometimes called by chroniclers " the Fifth " or " Conchubhar's Fifth." It seems, however, to have consisted of four practically independent kingdoms, no one of which held any permanent authority over the others. These were Dál Riada in the North-East, on the Antrim seaboard ; Ulaidh, on the Down seaboard—retaining the name of the ancient dominant people of Ulster ; Dál Araidhe, at the head of a Pictish people, occupying the inland parts of Down and Antrim and also the Derry side of the Bann valley from Loch Neagh northward to the sea ; and Conaille, likewise a Pictish kingdom, in the north of Co. Louth.

The remainder of Ulster, excluding Breifne, the kingdom of Aileach, and the eastern group, formed the kingdom of Airghialla or " Oriel." It should be borne in mind that this ancient Oriel of the fifth century extended northward to the mouth of Loch Foyle, and included the present Tyrone and most of Co. Derry, which were afterwards annexed to the kingdom of Aileach.

The territories of the Southern Ui Néill lay in

the counties of Meath, Westmeath, Longford, King's County, and Kildare; they were not continuous, being merely appropriated portions of the kingdom of Tara.

Connacht extended eastward to the Erne and its lakes and to Loch Ramor in Co. Cavan.

Munster comprised its present extent and also the two southern baronies of King's County.

The northern boundary of Leinster ran by the Liffey, its tributary the Rye, south of the barony of Carbury in Co. Kildare, and included part of King's County bordering on Queen's County and Kildare.

There were then seven chief kingdoms in Ireland, each of them containing a number of minor kingdoms. The seven chief kingdoms were (1) the kingdom of Tara, the midlands east of the Shannon; (2) the kingdom of Leinster; (3) the kingdom of Cashel or of Munster; (4) the kingdom of Cruachain or of Connacht; (5) the kingdom of Aileach, the Fochla, or the Northern Ui Néill; (6) the kingdom of Ulaidh or the lesser Ulster; (7) the kingdom of Oriel.

In Munster, a sort of partitioning or appropriation was effected by the ruling Eoghanacht dynasty, similar to what has been described as taking place in Connacht and Meath. At the head of all was the Eoghanacht of Cashel. Cashel was surrounded by a zone of tributary States, whose rulers were not of the Eoghanacht lineage. Westward of these was a belt of Eoghanacht States extending across Munster from the Shannon to the southern coast. These comprised the Ui Fidhgheinte in County

Limerick, the Eoghanacht of Aine, in the middle, and the Ui Liatháin to the south in parts of Cork and Waterford counties. There was another Eoghanacht kingdom in the region of Bandon. Finally there was the Eoghanacht of Loch Léin in the region of Killarney, called also the Eoghanacht of West Munster. I have already shown reason to think that the Eoghanachta represented a relatively late immigration from Gaul; that their original settlement was probably in the west of County Waterford; and that their conquest of south-western Leinster and occupation of Cashel may have taken place about the beginning of the fifth century. I have no means of fixing the date of their occupation of other parts of Munster, but these settlements are not likely to have been later than the fifth century.

In like manner, we find located in various parts of Leinster the septs that branch out from the royal line. I shall not cumber your attention with the details, which can be found in O'Donovan's notes to the Book of Rights. A much larger proportion of Leinster was appropriated in this way than of any of the other chief kingdoms, except Oriel. Oriel, being the main part of Ulster conquered by the Connacht-Meath princes in the fourth century, was treated entirely as a land of conquest, no portion of it remaining under the rule of its earlier dynasts.

In the case of Leinster, the relative lateness of these appropriations is proved by one fact. The septs that became possessed of territories in this way all belonged to the old ruling house of South

Leinster, but the territories appropriated to them are very largely situate within the bounds of the old kingdom of North Leinster. Hence the resettlement of these territories took place after the extinction of the North Leinster kingdom and the unification of what remained under the South Leinster dynasty. This shows that the process belongs to the same period in Leinster as in Connacht, and Meath, and Munster.

Though the annexation of Tara and Bregia was a fully accomplished fact long before St. Patrick's time, and though in his time the monarchy of Connacht origin was securely seated in Tara, the annals, whose details of history begin with St. Patrick, show that the claim to their northern territories was not yet relinquished by the Leinstermen. Time after time they invaded the lost land, and battle after battle was fought by them on its borders and even far within its borders. This continued struggle to recover possession is perhaps most clearly seen in a list of the battles from the year 432 onward—before that year we have no details.

A.D. 452. A great slaughter of the Leinstermen.

A.D. 453. The Leinstermen defeated in battle by Loeguire son of Niall [*i.e.* by the King of Tara].

A.D. 458. The battle of 'Ath Dara. Loeguire, king of Tara, is defeated by the Leinstermen and taken prisoner.

A.D. 464. Leinstermen win the battle of Ard Corann.

A.D. 473. Ailill Molt defeats the Leinstermen at Brí 'Eile. Ailill was king of Tara at this time. Brí 'Eile was in the kingdom of Meath.

A.D. 474. The Leinstermen defeat Ailill Molt at Dumha Aichir,

A.D. 486. Battle of Granard. Fínchath, a Leinster king, was defeated and slain. The sept of Cairbre, son of Niall of the Nine Hostages, was victorious. This sept held territory around Granard, and they were therefore resisting invasion by the Leinster king.

A.D. 487. Battle of Gráine in Kildare. Muirchertach, king of the Northern Ui Néill, defeats the Leinstermen.

A.D. 494. Battle of Tailltiu (=Teltown, near Navan). The Leinstermen are defeated by the sept of Cairbre, son of Niall.

A.D. 498. Battle of Inne Mor in Kildare. Leinstermen defeated by Muirchertach, king of the Northern Ui Néill.

A.D. 499. Battle of Slemain, in Westmeath. Leinstermen defeated by the sept of Cairbre, son of Niall.

A.D. 501. Battle of Cenn Ailbe in Kildare. Leinstermen defeated by the sept of Cairbre.

A.D. 503. Battle of Druim Lochmhuidhe. The Ui Néill defeated by the Leinstermen.

A.D. 510. Battle of Fremu, in Westmeath. The Leinstermen are victorious over the sept of Fiacha, son of Niall.

A.D. 517. Battle of Druim Derge. The Leinstermen are defeated by the sept of Fiacha. This was regarded as the final and decisive battle, which forced the Leinstermen to relinquish their attempts to recover the lost territory in Meath. "By it the plain of Meath was lost and won," says the poet-historian Cenn Faelad in the following century.

Thus we see that the Leinstermen maintained a prolonged struggle to recover possession of the midland country that belonged to them under the Pentarchy when a Leinster king reigned in Tara. There are no recorded particulars of this struggle before the year 452, but from that date onward, during two-thirds of a century, fourteen battles were fought on one side or other of the border. In four

of these battles, the Leinstermen were victorious. The septs of Cairbre and Fiacha, which appear so prominently in the defence of the conquered territory, were among those descendants of Niall who were settled in the lordship of lands in Meath. One Leinster dynastic sept continued to hold its territory in Meath, in submission to the new rulers. It is known by the name of Fir Tulach, "Men of the Mounds," and the name is perpetuated in that of the barony of Fartullagh in Westmeath.

While this struggle was going on, another event took place, which is marked as an epoch in Irish history by the ancient annals. The event is thus related:

A.D. 483. The battle of Ocha, in which Ailill Molt fell, was won by Luguid son of Loeguire and Muirchertach MacErca. From Conchobhar MacNessa to Cormac son of Art, 308 years. From Cormac to this battle, 206 years."

This summing of years in the old chronicle is in direct imitation of the Chronicle of Eusebius, upon which the Irish chronicle was founded. In Eusebius, or at all events in St. Jerome's Latin translation—for the original Greek chronicle now exists only in fragments—it is customary to divide the course of history by epochs connected with great events. As each of these epochs is reached, a summary of the years between all the preceding epochs is set out. Hence we see that the chronicler from whom this entry is taken—his name is Cuanu—had in his mind three principal epochs of Irish history. The first was the reign of Conchobhar MacNessa, the

celebrated king of Ulster. The second was the reign of Cormac. The third was the battle of Ocha.

The epoch of Conchobhar MacNessa in the chronicle is interesting as a further proof of the primacy, so to speak, which the Ulster hero-tales acquired in the earliest age of our written literature.

The reign of Cormac is an epoch, because, as I have shown in the fourth lecture, it is associated with the dissolution of the Pentarchy, the annexation of Tara to the realm of Connacht and Uisneach, and the definite beginnings of the Monarchy.

What then is the epochal significance of the battle of Ocha, in which Ailill Molt, king of Ireland, is defeated and slain, and Luguid son of Loeguire and his cousin MacErca, king of the Northern Ui Néill, are the victors ?

Ailill Molt was son of Nath-'I, that king of Ireland who died somewhere on the Continent, whither he had led an expedition in 429, and whose body was brought back to Ireland by his men and buried at Cruachain in the ancient cemetery of the kings of Connacht. Nath-'I, who succeeded Niall of the Nine Hostages, was the son of Niall's brother Fiachra, whose descendants were settled in Fiachra's Lands in the north-west and south-west of Connacht. The line of Fiachra was closely associated with Connacht and had no settlement elsewhere. At this period, the line of Fiachra alternated with the line of his brother Brión in the succession to the kingship of Connacht, until, by the operation of a law of succession which I shall have to describe in a later lecture, the descendants of Brión obtained

exclusive possession of the kingship. Thus, Ailill Molt, who was cut off in the battle of Ocha, in 483, may be described as a king of Ireland from Connacht.

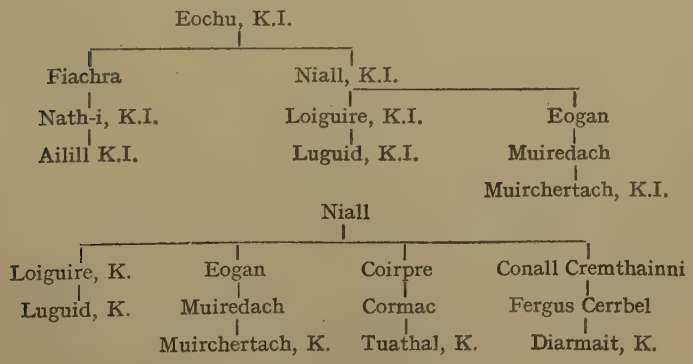
Who were the victors in the Battle of Ocha? They were Luguid, son of Loeguire, son of Niall, and Muirchertach, grandson of Eoghan, son of Niall. Luguid, son of Loeguire, thereupon became king of Ireland. His ally in the battle, Muirchertach, appears from this time forth at the head of the Northern Ui Néill, he is king of Aileach. Luguid, since he succeeded to the monarchy, must have been at the time recognised head of the Southern Ui Néill, his patrimony being in Meath. Consequently, this battle is the outcome of a combination of the Ui Néill, north and south, whose lands are outside of Connacht, against their kinsfolk, whose lands are in Connacht. From this date, 483, until the eleventh century, no king from Connacht became monarch of Ireland, and the monarchy remained in the exclusive possession of the Northern and Southern Ui Néill. That is why the battle of Ocha is marked as an epoch by the ancient chronicler.

The line of Niall in like manner is excluded from the kingship of Connacht, which had been held by Niall himself and by his son Loeguire, before they became kings of Tara. Henceforth there is no longer a joint dynasty of Connacht and Meath.

The clue to the main path of Irish history during the partly obscure period of the first five centuries of the Christian era is the gradual expansion of the power of the Connacht dynasty over northern Ireland from the occupation of Uisneach until this year

483, when expansion reached the point of rupture. To trace this process and the concurrent or partly concurrent growth of the Eoghanacht power in Munster, has been the matter of my fourth, fifth, and sixth lectures. It is evident that the chronicler Cuanu, who wrote early in the eighth century, had some such general view before his mind of the history of this period based on the traditions and records known to him. His three epochs stand good as bearings for our guidance—first, the Pentarchy at the height of its traditional celebrity; second, the extension of the Connacht power to Tara, and the rise of the monarchy; and third, the disconnection of Connacht from Tara and the monarchy, and the dominant position acquired by the line of Niall. The old chronicler, with his three epochs, saw something more in the dim morning twilight of those centuries than a procession of names and dates and disconnected anecdotes. He saw something of a story with its sequence, a drama in three acts; and we are entitled to share in his satisfaction.

GENEALOGY OF MONARCHY (5th CENTURY).



VII. THE IRISH KINGDOM IN SCOTLAND

IT was about the year 470 when the sons of Erc, Fergus and his brothers went from Ireland to Scotland. Fergus was king of Dál Riada in the north-eastern corner of Ireland. We are not to understand that the main Irish migration to Scotland took place at that time. There are no data to show when the earliest Irish settlements were made in Argyleshire and the adjoining islands, but we have seen that, at the close of the third century, when Constantius Chlorus commanded the Roman power in Britain, the Britons were already "accustomed" to Irish enemies. If the Irish were then strong enough to raid the Roman frontier, they were probably in possession of the Cantire peninsula. The crossing over of the Sons of Erc means that these princes established their rule over the Irish settlements in that region. It is a common mistake of histories to suppose that Fergus, when he became king on the other side, established there a new dynasty. Editors of the Irish annals, taking this for granted, actually undertake to tell us that certain men whom the annals style kings of Dál Riada were kings of the Scottish Dál Riada, and certain others who are also entitled kings of Dál Riada, were kings of the Irish Dál Riada. Here again the genealogies supplement the annals

and show clearly that all these kings belonged to one undivided dynasty. Dál Riada in Ireland and the Irish settlers in Scotland were ruled by the same kings from the time of Fergus macEirc until the Norsemen occupied Cantire and the neighbouring islands, and thus cut off the Irish territory of these kings from the Scottish territory in which the kings of Dál Riada had become resident. When this separation took place, the title "king of Dál Riada" was abandoned. The last king who bears that title in the Irish annals is Donn Coirci, who died in 792; and in 794 the same annals record "the devastation of all the islands of Britain by the heathens."

The account of the Irish migration given by the Venerable Bede has often been repeated. It is true in so far as it indicates that the migration did not begin under the Sons of Erc. In other respects it is a fictitious legend. "In process of time," writes Bede, "besides the Britons and Picts, Britain received a third nation, the Scots, who, migrating from Ireland under their leader Reuda, either by fair means or by force of arms, secured to themselves those settlements among the Picts which they still possess. From the name of their commander they are to this day called Dalreudini; for in their language *dal* signifies a part.

"Ireland," he goes on to say, "in breadth and for wholesomeness and serenity of climate far surpasses Britain; for the snow scarcely ever lies there above three days; no man makes hay in the summer for winter's provision or builds stables

for his beasts of burden. No reptiles are found there and no snake can live there; for, though often carried thither out of Britain, as soon as the ship comes near the shore, and the scent of the air reaches them, they die. On the contrary, almost all things in the island are good against poison. In short, we have known that when some persons have been bitten by serpents, the scrapings of leaves of books that were brought out of Ireland, being put into water and given to them to drink, have immediately expelled the spreading poison and assuaged the swelling." (We see that when people in Britain in those days wanted something that came from Ireland, the first thing and the sure thing was a book.) "The island," he continues, "abounds in milk and honey; nor is there any want of vines, fish or fowl; and it is remarkable for deer and goats." (But vines were not cultivated in Ireland, and if Bede supposed they were, it must have been because wine was abundant, as an article of continental trade imported in exchange for Irish products.) "It is properly," he adds, "the country of the Scots, who migrating from thence, as has been said, added a third nation in Britain to the Britons and the Picts. There is a very large gulf of the sea [he refers to the Firth of Clyde] which formerly divided the nation of the Picts from the Britons. It runs from the west very far into the land, where to this day stands the strong city of the Britons called Alcluith [Dumbarton]. The Scots arriving on the north side of this bay, settled themselves there."

Bede gives no date for this event, but relates it

before the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar (B.C. 54). No Irish leader Reuda headed an Irish migration to Scotland. The Irish genealogists tell us that Dál Riada takes its name from Cairbre Riada, an ancestor of Fergus and nine generations (*i.e.* about three centuries) earlier than Fergus; and they agree with the annals in saying that the first of Cairbre Riada's line who settled in Scotland were Fergus and his brethren.

In 563, Conall, great-grandson of Fergus, granted the island of Iona to St. Columba. Conall was succeeded in the kingship by Aedán, with whom St. Columba lived on most friendly terms. It was in Aedán's reign, in 575, that the relations between his kingdom and the kingdom of Ireland were decided at the assembly of Druim Ceata, St. Columba being present. A great deal of fanciful comment has been made on this decision. One writer after another assures us that St. Columba secured a declaration of independence for the kingdom beyond the sea. The sole ancient authority on the subject is the commentary on Dallán's Eulogy of St. Columba. It says nothing about independence, nor does it suggest that the independence of the Irish kingdom in Scotland was ever called in question. The problem that demanded adjudication was this: the old territory of Dàl Riada in Ireland had become attached to two independent jurisdictions. Being part of Ireland, it was subject to the suzerain claims of the kings of Ireland. But its kings, as we have seen, were kings also of a realm beyond the sea over which the Irish monarch had no

authority. A conflict of rights and claims was possible. The decision at Druim Ceata, pronounced by a lawyer of celebrity and accepted by the assembly, was in the nature of a compromise: Dál Riada was to serve the Irish monarch with its land forces, and to serve the king who reigned in Scotland with its sea forces. Obviously it is the services of the Irish territory that are the subject of this judgment. It would be absurd to lay down that the Irish colony in Scotland was to serve the king of Ireland with land forces and not with ships.

Scottish writers look upon the Life of St. Columba by Adamnanus as the oldest native document of Scottish history. It was written about the year 692. If I am not mistaken, we have a document about twenty years older, written in Scotland, probably in Iona, and now preserved in the preface to the genealogy of the Scottish kings in the Books of Lecan and Ballymote. At the time when it was written, the realm of the Scots in Scotland did not extend beyond Argyleshire and the adjacent islands. That was about the year 670. Northwards of Argyleshire, the Picts held sway. On the eastern side, the Pictish territory extended southward to the Firth of Forth. From the Firth of Forth to the Tweed, along the eastern coast, the country now comprised in the Lothians and Berwickshire was occupied by the Angles under the king of Northumbria. The south-western portion was held by the Britons, who, in Bede's time, half a century later, possessed the strong fortress of Dumbarton on the Clyde. The frontier between the Britons and

the Angles was probably no certain line. In the south-western corner, in Galloway, there was an isolated Pictish population. The borders separating these four nations, Scots, Picts, Angles, and Britons, speaking four distinct languages, were a land of constant war.

St. Columba, we are told by his biographer, warned the king of Dál Riada to refrain from making war in Ireland on the king of Ireland, and foretold that, if this warning were disregarded, disaster would befall the line of Aedán. Adamnanus goes on to say that this prophecy was fulfilled many years after St. Columba's death. This was written by Adamnanus about fifty years after the event to which he alludes, which was therefore within the memory of many who read his words. Domhnall Breac, king of Dál Riada, he relates, invaded the realm of the king of Ireland. And now, he says, the fulfilment of the warning is visible in the miserable condition to which the kings of Dál Riada are reduced, humiliated by their triumphant enemies.

He refers to the events connected with the battle of Moira in 637. The king of Ireland at the time was Domhnall son of Aedh, that is, son of the king who presided over the Assembly of Druim Ceata. Taking advantage of a quarrel between the Irish monarch and a prince of the north-eastern Picts of Ireland, the Scottish king, as we may call him, put himself at the head of a combination of the north-eastern province and took the field in Ireland. The battle between the two Domhnalls took place at Moira, near Lisburn, and the king of Ireland was

victorious. Here we have an instance of the method of contemporary Irish chroniclers. To the chronicler's mind, everybody knew everything that was to be known about this battle and its circumstances, and his record of the event is a mere memorandum in two words. But what were the disastrous results, which, on the testimony of Adamnanus, were notorious when he wrote, *i.e.* about the year 690? The Irish kingdom in Scotland seems as strong as ever, and is on the eve of a great increase of its power and territory. Once more, as in the instance of the judgment of Druim Ceata, the reference must be particularly to the old Irish kingdom of Dál Riada, which drops into obscurity in the Irish records about that time, possibly becoming tributary either to the neighbouring Picts or to the Northern Ui Néill, whose territory had then extended to the banks of the Bann.

Bede, writing about forty years after Adamnanus wrote, tells about certain things that happened in the lifetime of both, and shows how great an expansion was made by the Irish kingdom of Scotland in the meantime. In the year 684, he relates, his own sovereign, "Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, sending Beorht, his general, with an army into Ireland, miserably wasted that harmless nation, which had always been most friendly to the English." This statement shows that the power of the Northumbrian Angles extended at the time to the Irish Sea. "In their hostile rage," says Bede, "they spared not even the churches or monasteries." The

contemporary Irish chronicler says briefly: "The English devastate the plain of Bregia and many churches in the month of June." Bede continues: "Those islanders, to the utmost of their power repelled force with force, and imploring the assistance of the Divine mercy prayed long and fervently for vengeance; and, though such as curse cannot possess the kingdom of God, it is believed that those who were justly cursed on account of their impiety did soon suffer the penalty of their guilt from the avenging hand of God; for the very next year, that king, rashly leading his army to ravage the province of the Picts, much against the advice of his friends and particularly of Cuthbert of blessed memory who had been lately ordained bishop, the enemy made show as if they fled, and the king was drawn into the straits of inaccessible mountains, and slain, with the greatest part of his forces, on the 20th of May." The Irish chronicle says: "On the 20th of May, on Saturday, the battle of Dún Nechtain was fought, in which Ecgferth, king of the English, was slain together with a great multitude of his soldiers."

Bede, writing forty-six years later, says that from the time of this overthrow the power of the Northumbrian Angles began to decline, and the Picts recovered some of their territory which had been in the possession of the Angles, as well as some which had been taken from them by the Scots. The ancient territory of Northumbria extended to the Firth of Forth. Skene identifies the scene of the battle with a narrow pass in the Sidlaw Hills, north

of the Firth of Tay. The territory which the Picts recovered from the Angles must have been between these two firths, corresponding to the modern Fifeshire; and this is apparent from a further statement by Bede. Among the English fugitives from the lost territory, he says, was Bishop Trumwine, who had been made bishop over the English settlers, and who withdrew along with his people who were in the monastery of Abercorn. Abercorn is near the Forth Bridge, about ten miles west of Edinburgh. If the Anglian bishop and his people were forced to abandon this place, it is clear that the recovered Pictish territory reached the Firth of Forth on the opposite side, the north side. But, writing forty-six years after these events, Bede calls the Firth of Forth "the arm of the sea which parts the lands of the Angles and the Scots," not the lands of the Angles and the Picts. Consequently, within those forty-six years, the Scots, who a little earlier appear to have held little or nothing of the mainland outside of Argyleshire, must have extended their power eastward into Fifeshire, occupying that district from which the Picts had expelled the encroaching Angles.

The Britons of south-western Scotland appear to have been hard pressed by this eastward expansion of the Scots and by the Angles of Northumbria, and modern Welsh historians trace an extensive southward migration of Britons through Cumberland and Lancashire into Wales. These migratory Britons, headed by the sons of Cunedda, became thenceforward the dominant people in Wales. They

completely displaced the power of the Irish settlers in North Wales, and the descendants of the Irish in South Wales became subordinate to them. About this time, too, many of the displaced Britons took service in Ireland under Irish kings. In 682, a victory was won near Antrim, we are not told by whom, over a combination of Britons and Ulster Picts. In 697, the district of Dundalk was devastated by Britons in alliance with the Ulidians. In 702, 'Irgalach, king of Bregia, was killed on Ireland's Eye by a party of raiding Britons. In 703, the Ulidians defeated a body of Britons near Newry. In 709, Britons are found fighting in the service of a king of Leinster. In 711 and again in 717, forces of Britons were defeated by Dál Riada. These events all occur within a period of thirty years, about the year 700, and after this time the British incursions are no longer heard of. The movements of the Britons thus chronicled correspond in time with the eastward and perhaps southward expansion of the Scots from Argyle.

Some of the Venerable Bede's pupils must have lived to witness the first appearance of the swarming fleets of heathen Norsemen, towards the close of the eighth century. Within a few decades, the Norsemen held possession of nearly all the islands of Scotland. They also settled on the mainland in Caithness, Argyle, Cunningham and Galloway—at what dates does not appear to be recorded. By thus infesting the entire coast of Scotland, they weakened the power of the Picts in the North and the Angles in the South-east. That there is no sign

of any concurrent weakening of the Scots may be taken as proof that the Scots by this time, the early part of the ninth century, had a firm grip of the interior. It may well have been, indeed, that their displacement from Argyle and the islands—their sole possessions in Scotland in the seventh century—may have strengthened the hand of Cinaedh, son of Ailpín (called "Kenneth MacAlpin" in English writings). As arrows in the hand of the mighty, so are the sons of them that have been beaten out. Cinaedh died in 858 after a reign of sixteen years, during which he overthrew the kingdom of the Picts and became ruler of the main part of the country afterwards called Scotland. In recording the death of Cinaedh the Annals of Ulster style him "king of the Picts," meaning that he had brought the Picts under his authority. According to later histories he also obtained the submission of the Britons and Angles of southern Scotland; they certainly ceased to have any considerable power after his time. The Britons held out in their fortress at Dumbarton until 870, when, after a siege of four months, the place was taken by Olaf and Imar, the joint-reigning Norse kings of Dublin. These kings, with a fleet of 200 ships, returned next year to Dublin, "bringing a great spoil of men, Angles and Britons and Picts, in captivity." The Northumbrian kingdom, even south of the Tweed, was crumbling away. In 867, the Norsemen occupied York and defeated the Angles who came against them; and in 876, Halfdene, a Norse commander, parcelled out the remnant of Northumbria among his followers,

who settled upon the lands, says the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and thenceforth set about ploughing and tilling them. In the same year, 876, Rolf the Ganger, of the line of the Norse earls of the Orkneys, took possession of Normandy.

Here it is well to consider the various fortunes of the Norsemen in different countries. About this period, they became masters of a large part of Russia. In France, they were able to wrest the northern seaboard, between Flanders and Brittany, from the powerful Frankish kings. Over England they effected a gradual conquest, which was only checked, not overcome by the stout resistance of Athelstan and Alfred. In 1013, the year before the battle of Clontarf, all England submitted to Sveinn, king of Denmark. The Normans mastered southern Italy and Sicily. But the Celtic countries, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Brittany. though particularly exposed to conquest by a people who were then undisputed rulers of the seas on every side, yielded them only a small fraction of their mainland territories. The resistance of Scotland is especially noteworthy. From Norway and Denmark, Scotland was then two days' sail. All the islands and forelands of Scotland were occupied by the Norsemen—the Orkney and Shetland Islands, the Hebrides, Arran and Bute, Caithness, and the peninsulas of Argyle and Galloway; as well as the Isle of Man. But the recently established Scottish monarchy checked all further attempts at conquest, and ultimately recovered the whole country, both mainland and islands.

Another noteworthy fact about this new kingdom

was its adoption of a polity quite distinct from that of the older established Britons and Irish in their own countries. In Ireland, the population ranged itself around local places of assembly, according to the traditional habit and convenience of coming together; and the chiefs who presided over these local assemblies took the rank and title of kings. Each of these assemblies was a court of law as well as a court of state. For modern convenience, there are about 150 places in Ireland in which courts of quarter sessions are held. In ancient Ireland, in the ninth century, there were a little more than 100 courts, and the president of each was a king. Everywhere, there was a strong sentiment of local autonomy and the strongest and most ambitious of the superior kings could only maintain a limited degree of centralised power. Probably the Celts came into Ireland in small separate bodies, each colony having its own government, and so no tradition of centralisation ever grew up. In Scotland, on the contrary, from the fifth century onward there was but one kingdom of the Scots, and this one kingdom effected a gradual conquest of the whole country. Thus the Irish system of petty states was not transplanted to Scotland. The highest magnates under the Scottish monarchy bore the title of *mór-mhaor*, "great steward," which in later times was regarded as the equivalent of "earl." This title is mentioned in the Annals of Ulster under the year 918 and in such a way as to show that it was then a recognised and customary dignity among the oversea Scots. In that year, just 1,000 years ago, Raghnall or "Regi-

nald," founder and king of the Norse colony of Waterford, carried his forces into Britain, finding a small part of Ireland large enough for him. On the banks of the Tyne, in Northumbria, he was met by the army of the Scots—the place indicates how far the power of the Scots at that time extended. An indecisive battle took place, in which, says the annalist, the Scots "lost neither king nor *mór-mhaor*."

That the conquest of the mainland was followed by a very extensive Gaelic colonisation is evident from the abundance of Gaelic place-names in almost every part of Scotland. They are least numerous in the old Anglian territory of the Lothians and Berwickshire, and from this it is evident that the Anglian population was left for the most part undisturbed. The surname Scott indicates that, among their Anglian neighbours, the great border sept that bore the name was recognised to be of Irish origin. Even in Galloway, a region of Picts and Britons and Norsemen, the Gaelic language became prevalent and the Gaelic people abundant—for in the twelfth century the population of Galloway was known to the Irish and also to the Norsemen as Gall-Ghaedhil, *i.e.*, "Norse-Irish." Though Alan, the Norse earl of Galloway, set himself up as an independent sovereign about the year 1200 and formed an alliance with the English under King John, his language was Irish, for he gave his daughter a name that bespeaks an Irish-speaking household—Dearbhorgaill. The Irish annals call him "king of the Gall-Ghaedhil."

The Scots opposed a successful resistance to William the Conqueror and his successors, whenever they attempted a conquest. To the Conqueror they were especially obnoxious, for Maol Choluim Ceann-mhór ('Malcolm Canmore") took under his protection the refugee royal family of England, the Athelings. In 1067, Malcolm married a princess of this line, Margaret, grand-daughter of the Saxon king Edmund—St. Margaret of Scotland, for she was canonised after her death. This queen exercised great influence over her husband, and brought about a partial feudalisation of the Gaelic system in Scotland. From her time onward, the small Anglian population not merely acquired a favourable status but gradually took on the appearance of being the most considerable element in the kingdom. Various causes contributed to this end. The Northumbrian dialect of English, now chiefly represented by the Lowland Scotch dialect, became the most convenient medium of intercourse not only with England but also with the Norsemen and the people of the Low Countries. To this day Lowland Scotch bears a close resemblance to Dutch and Flemish, and we have it on the ancient testimony of the Norsemen themselves that they were able to hold speech with the Angles, each people using their own language. In consequence, the Anglian dialect of Scotland spread westward across the Lowlands and northward along the coast of the North Sea. There is, however, one little fact which shows us how effectively Margaret's influence operated against the Gaelic tradition of the Scottish court and its

outlook. Before her time, the kings of the Dál Riada line bore Irish names. Only two names that are not Irish are found in their list—Constantine and Gregory, the names of a celebrated Emperor and a celebrated Pope. The names of the six sons of Malcolm and Margaret were: Edward, Edmund, Edgar, Ethelred, Alexander, and David; of their two daughters, Maud and Mary—not one of them Gaelic; and with the exception of Malcolm's immediate successor, Domhnall, and another Malcolm, no king of the Scots after his time bore a Gaelic name.

Malcolm's kingdom, though it did not extend over the Norse settlements in the north and west of Scotland, included a territory roughly corresponding to Cumberland and Northumberland in the north of England.

A frequent effect of the feudal law of succession by primogeniture was the breach of succession owing to the failure of heirs in the male line. Under the Irish (and also Welsh) law of succession, by election from a family group, this difficulty was avoided. After Malcolm's death in 1093, his brother, Domhnall Bán, secured the kingship and, we are told, expelled all the foreigners who had come to Scotland under the protection of Malcolm and Margaret. In effect, the reign of Domhnall represents a brief Gaelic reaction against the new-come feudalism. In 1097, Domhnall was overthrown by Malcolm's eldest surviving son Edgar, with the assistance of the English, and thenceforward the feudal system took hold and the Irish kingdom may be said to have come to an

end. Nevertheless, the Irish tradition was not wholly abandoned. The last of the Dalriadic kings was Alexander III who reigned from 1249 until 1285. In his reign, all the Norse possessions formerly subject to the suzerainty of the kings of Norway, comprising the Orkney and Shetland islands, Caithness, the Hebrides and Argyleshire, became subject to the kingdom of Scotland. The failure of the direct line, upon Alexander's death without male heir, brought about the wars of the Scottish succession, terminated by the battle of Bannockburn in 1314. An interesting account has been preserved of the coronation ceremony as exemplified at the accession of this last king of the direct Irish line in Scotland, Alexander III. "The ceremony was performed by the bishop of St. Andrews, who girded the king with a military belt. He then explained in Latin, and afterwards in Gaelic, the laws and oaths relating to the king. . . . After the ceremony was performed, a Highlander "—we may understand that he was the official *seanchaidh*—" repeated on his knees before the throne, in his own language, the genealogy of Alexander and his ancestors, up to the first king of Scotland." Gaelic, therefore, continued to be the language of the Scottish court, of king, bishop, and courtier, until 1285, when the direct line of Fergus son of Erc became extinct.

Having endeavoured to trace the principal phases in the history of an Irish kingdom which, established in Argyle and the western islands of Scotland, became gradually more and more alienated from the mother country, let us now glance through the history

of another kingdom, a foreign kingdom established in the same forelands and islands, a realm which became gaelicised as the Scots kingdom became feudalised and anglicised, and which drew closer and closer to Ireland, so as to bring a decisive element into the affairs of this nation during a critical period in its history.

I have already shown how, while the Scots were becoming masters of the mainland in northern Britain, the Norsemen took possession of the old Dalriadic territory of Argyle and the islands. On the mainland, the Norsemen also occupied Cunningham in Ayrshire, Galloway to the north of the Solway Firth, and Caithness in the far north. In the Gaelic of Scotland, both Galloway and Caithness are named Gallaibh, *i.e.* the Foreigners' territory, and the Irish name of the Hebrides after they passed into Norse hands is Innse Gall, "the Foreigners' islands."

We have no records to show the precise date at which these colonies were established, but in view of the Norse supremacy on the seas from the close of the eighth century, their establishment is not likely to have been later than the foundation of the first Norse colony on the Irish mainland, namely, the colony of Dublin, in 841. The year after this, 842, Cinaedh, the future conqueror of the Picts and Britons and Angles, became king of the Scots.

The first clearly defined authority found among these Norse settlements is that of the Orkney earls, dating from before 880. Before that time, a mixed Norse and Gaelic population, called Gall-Ghaedhil,

is seen taking part in the Norse wars in Ireland, some on the Norse and some on the Irish side, as may be seen from the annals of the years 856 and 857. These people doubtless came from Scotland, perhaps also from the Isle of Man, also occupied by the Norsemen. Their language was broken Irish, as may be judged from the words of an Irish tract which, in praising the accurate utterance of a speaker, says "it is not the *giog-gog* of a Gall-Ghaedheal." But they must also have used the Norse language.

About the year 880, Harold the Fair, king of Norway, came over and established the supremacy of Norway over the settlements in the Orkneys, the Hebrides, Argyle and the Isle of Man.

A century later, in 980, we find the Hebrides used as a recruiting ground by the Norse king of Dublin. In that year Mael Sechnaill, king of Ireland, won the battle of Tara against "the Foreigners of Dublin and the Islands." After this defeat, Olaf, king of Dublin, laid down his kingship and retired into religious life in Iona, where he died not long later. The incident shows that the Norse islanders had by this time accepted Christianity, and that Iona, which they had barbarously ravaged again and again, had regained among them the religious prestige that it held before among the people of Ireland and Scotland.

About this time, the Danes, who first appear on our coasts in hostility to the Norwegians, established a kingdom of the Hebrides, under Godred, son of Harold. Godred invaded Dál Riada in Ulster in 989, and was killed there. His son Rögnvald became

king of the Hebrides and died in 1005. With his death, the Danish kingdom in the islands appears to cease.

In 1014, the chief magnate of the Hebrides was Earl Gilli. He held aloof from the great muster of Norsemen from many regions that came to Clontarf to win the sovereignty of Ireland for Earl Sigurd of the Orkneys. From 1041 till 1064, the Hebrides appear subject to the Orkney earl Thorfinn. During this time, the islands supplied forces to Harald Hardrada, king of Norway, for an invasion of England. After this time, there are indications that the predominance of the Orkney earls was replaced in the Hebrides by that of the kings of the Isle of Man. Later on, the kings of Man are seen to occupy a middle position of authority between the kings of Norway and the local rulers of the Hebrides. In the title of the bishops of Sodor and Man, the name Sodor is an abbreviation for Sudreyar, " the southern isles," this being the ordinary Norse name for the Hebrides, in contradistinction to the northern isles of Orkney and Shetland.

In 1098, Magnus Barefoot, king of Norway, came with a fleet and re-established the somewhat shaky Norwegian sovereignty over the Orkneys, the Hebrides, Cantire, and the Isle of Man. Four years later, in 1102, he again visited these dominions and was received without opposition. The following year, 1103, king Magnus landed in eastern Ulster and was cut off and slain.

In 1134, a young Hebridean named Gilla Críst, claiming to be a son of Magnus, became king of

Norway under the name of Harald Gilli. About this time, the most prominent magnate in the Hebrides was named Holdbodi, who lived in the island of Tiree. The Norse documents dealing with these times and with the succeeding century never suggest that the masters of the Hebrides use any language but Norse, though some of them bear Gaelic names; and the same documents apply the name Scots to the mainlanders only, never to the people of the islands.

In 1157, we find the first mention of a ruler named Sumarlidi, who dwelt on the mainland of Argyleshire. In Irish he is called Somhairlidh, and in recording his death in 1164, the Annals of Tighernach entitle him "king of the Hebrides and Cantire." Fordun's Chronicle calls him "king of Argyle." Sumarlidi was in fact the founder of a new Norse kingdom of the Hebrides and Argyle, which lasted from his time, about 1150, until 1499, when the last king of his line was captured by the king of Scotland and hanged, along with his son and grandsons, on the Boroughmuir at Edinburgh. Sumarlidi was killed in 1164, in an attempt to invade the mainland south of the Clyde.

This Sumarlidi was the ancestor of the families of MacDomhnaill (MacDonnell, MacDonald), Mac Dubhghaill (MacDugall, MacDowell, etc.), and Mac Ruaidhri (MacRory). More than two centuries after his time, when many of his descendants had settled in Ireland, a pedigree was forthcoming to trace his descent from one of the Three Collas who overthrew the ancient kingdom of Ulster in the fourth century.

In Scotland, his descendants seem to have been provided with another pedigree, which established their descent from Fergus, son of Erc, who founded the Irish kingdom in Scotland. Ultimately a blend of the two pedigrees found acceptance, and no doubt there are many MacDonnells and MacDugalds and MacRorys who believe in it. Apart from its other weak points, this genealogy of the race of Sumarlidi is too short by about nine generations or three centuries.

Scottish writers in general show a remarkable shyness in dealing with this kingdom of Argyle and the Hebrides, and the highest title they are accustomed to accord to its rulers is that of "Lords of the Isles." In contemporary Norwegian and Irish records, the title is always "king."

Internal dissensions in Norway left the Hebrides practically independent for half a century after the rise of Sumarlidi. In 1210, when these dissensions were composed, the kings of the Hebrides and the Isle of Man made haste to Norway and renewed their fealty to King Ingi. On the death of this king without heir in 1217, and the renewal of the disorders of Norway, the Hebrides again fell away from their allegiance. In 1224, Hakon, of doubtful paternity, was accepted as king of Norway. At this time Alan of Galloway threatened to extend his dominion over the Hebrides and the Isle of Man. King Hakon found a Hebridean adventurer named Ospak, who had long lived in Norway and had taken part in the wars of the factions. He appointed this Ospak king over the Hebrides. For greater prestige he re-named

Ospak after himself, Hakon, and sent him with a small fleet in 1230 to bring the Hebrides under his authority. After a partial success, Ospak fell sick and died. Fresh troubles breaking out in Norway prevented Hakon from following up his Hebridean policy and encouraged the king of Scotland, Alexander II, to aim at the recovery or annexation of the islands. To this end, in 1242, Alexander sent an embassy to Norway offering to buy out the Norwegian claims. This proposal was rejected by Hakon. It was afterwards renewed and again rejected.

In the meantime, Alexander, stronger by land than by sea, made war on the Hebridean kings for the possession of Argyle, Arran, and Bute, and appears to have gained a strong foothold in those parts. In 1248 a dispute arose between two of Sumarlidi's descendants over the kingship. Both went to Norway to seek a decision from King Hakon. Hakon disliked decisions, and was content to keep the claimants for a year in Norway. Next year Alexander of Scotland renewed his efforts. He sent a third offer of purchase to Hakon and at the same time made open preparations for conquest. He also endeavoured to win over Jon, king of the Hebrides, from his allegiance to Norway. Jon held out, and in the midst of the preparations for invasion, Alexander died (1249).

He was succeeded by his son, Alexander III, already spoken of in this lecture, last of the Dalriadic kings in the direct line. When that interesting coronation ceremony in Latin and Gaelic was per-

formed, Alexander III was only nine years of age. During his minority, the connection between Norway and the Hebrides was maintained. In 1252, Archbishop Sorli of Drontheim in Norway, being then at Rome, assisted in the consecration of a bishop named Rikard for the Hebrides. In 1253, Jon and Dubhghall, joint kings of the Hebrides, went again to Norway to assist king Hakon in a war against Denmark.

In 1261, Alexander III, having come of age, took up his father's policy of annexing the Norse dominions adjoining Scotland, and sent a fresh embassy to Norway. Failing to make terms, he began next year the invasion of the islands. He reoccupied Bute and Cantire, and sent a marauding expedition under the Earl of Ross into the island of Skye. King Jon of the Hebrides wrote informing Hakon of what was going on, and from the sequel we may judge that he held out no hope of being able to resist Alexander. Hakon called together his council, some of whom proposed to relinquish the islands to Scotland, but the king ordered that an expedition at full strength should be raised next year. It was always the next opportunity with King Hakon. Next year, 1263, he spent the time until the end of July in making ready. In the meantime, King Jon made terms for himself with Alexander and transferred his allegiance to Scotland. Hakon made a slow progress with his fleet through the islands and reoccupied part of Cantire and also Arran and Bute. Alexander, relying on the approach of winter, re-opened negotiations and

kept them going till the arrival of the equinoctial gales. On October 1, Hakon's fleet was partly scattered by a violent storm. Some ships were driven on the coast of Ayrshire. Here a trifling encounter took place with the Scottish forces. It has been magnified in Scottish histories into the battle of Largs, in which, we are told, 16,000 Norwegians were slain.

The misadventures of his fleet and the defection of Jon convinced Hakon that he could only hold the Hebrides by main force, and he decided to return to Norway and come again next year with a still stronger expedition. When he reached the Orkneys, he fell sick and died.

In the meantime, he had received an embassy from the Irish offering him the kingdom of Ireland on condition of expelling the English power. I propose to deal with this occurrence in a later lecture.

With the death of Hakon in 1263 the Norwegian sovereignty over the Hebrides and Argyle came to an end; and in 1265 his son Magnus made a formal cession of the territory to Alexander.

During all this time, the chief power in the Hebrides belonged to the MacDubhghaill line, the sons and grandsons of Dubhghall son of Sumarlidi. In the wars of the Scottish succession, these kings supported the side of John Balliol and the English. Their kinsfolk, the MacDomhnaill and MacRuaidhri chiefs took the side of Robert Bruce. After Bruce's triumph at Bannockburn in 1314, MacDomhnaill became king of Argyle and MacRuaidhri became

king of the islands. These two kings joined Edward Bruce in Ireland and along with him fell fighting in the battle of Fochairt in 1318.

In 1387, Domhnall of Isla, head of the MacDomhnaill line, became king of the Hebrides, and through his mother inherited also the great earldom of Ross on the mainland, his power becoming thus a menace to the kingdom of Scotland. The regent Albany sought by legal chicane to deprive him of Ross. Domhnall took up arms and engaged the regent's army in the bloody battle of Harlaw near Aberdeen in 1411. The battle was not decisive in the military sense, but Domhnall succeeded in keeping the earldom of Ross.

His brother Eoin Mor, about the year 1400, by marriage with the heiress of Biset, lord of the Glens in Ireland, came into possession of that lordship, extending from the Giants' Causeway to a line a little south of Larne. In 1431, James I of Scotland sent an army into Argyle. This army was defeated in the battle of Inverlochy by Domhnall Ballach, son of Eoin and at that time king of Argyle and the Islands. In 1462, Eoin son of Domhnall entered into a secret treaty to assist Edward IV of England in the conquest of Scotland. This pact was discovered by James III of Scotland in 1475. An expedition was prepared against Eoin by land and sea, but he obtained peace by a timely submission and by relinquishing the lordships of Ross, Knapdale and Cantire. In 1493, Eoin again became obnoxious. He was attainted in the Scottish par-

liament and his feudatories were forced to swear direct allegiance to the Scottish crown. James IV made a new grant of Cantire to a son of Eoin Mór, named Eoin Cathanach from his having been fostered by O'Catháin in Ulster. The Scottish king came in person to Cantire in 1499 and placed a garrison in the castle of Dunaverty which he had reserved to the crown. James had only put out to sea from Dunaverty when, still in his sight, Eoin Cathanach attacked and captured the castle and hanged the governor from the wall. This time there was no forgiveness. Before the year was out, Eoin Cathanach and his aged father, the king of the Hebrides, fell into the hands of Giolla Easpuig, the new earl of Argyle, head of the house of Campbell which the Scottish kings aggrandised as a check on the power of the MacDonnells. The captives were handed over to King James. The sequel is recorded by a contemporary Irish chronicler in the Annals of Ulster:

"A sad deed was done in this year (1499) by the king of Scotland, James Stewart. Eoin Mac Domhnaill, king of the Foreigners' Isles, and Eoin Cathanach his son, and Raghnall the Red and Domhnall the Freckled, sons of Eoin Cathanach, were executed on one gallows the month before Lammas."

So ended the kingdom of the Hebrides, which the line of Sumarlidi had held for three centuries and a half.

Another son of Eoin Cathanach escaped, and retained the lordship of the Glens. This was

Alasdair Carrach, father of the celebrated Somhairle Buidhe and ancestor of the Earls of Antrim. A grand-daughter of Alasdair Carrach was the Inghean Dubh, mother of Aodh Ruadh O'Domhnaill.

VIII. IRELAND'S GOLDEN AGE

AS the conversion of Ireland to Christianity did not begin with Saint Patrick, so also he did not live to complete it. To say this is not to belittle his work or to deprive him of the honour that has been accorded to him by every generation of Irishmen since his death. No one man has ever left so strong and permanent impression of his personality on a people, with the single and eminent exception of Moses, the deliverer and lawgiver of Israel. It is curious to note that the comparison between these two men was present to the minds of our forefathers. Both had lived in captivity. Both had led the people from bondage. Some of the legends of St. Patrick were perhaps based on this comparison, especially the account of his competition with the Druids. Some of his lives go so far as to give him the years of Moses, six score years, making him live till the year 492, sixty years after the beginning of his mission. There is good evidence, however, that the earlier date of his death, 461, found in our oldest chronicle, and also in the Welsh chronicle, is the authentic date. Father Hogan, in his "Documenta Vitae S. Patricii," has drawn up a table of the acts of St. Patrick, and after this date, 461, the table is a blank. I have already alluded to the feature adopted by our early chroniclers from St.

Jerome's version of Eusebius—the marking of certain epochs by giving the sum of years from a preceding epoch. We must remember that in those days the custom so familiar to us of giving an arithmetical name to every year, all in one series, was quite unknown. The first historian to use this method consistently was Bede, and it did not obtain general vogue until long after his time. In Ireland, though Bede's writings were intimately known, his method of dating by the year of the Christian era does not appear to have been taken up until the eleventh century—nearly three centuries after his time. What then was the ordinary method of dating? It was by regnal years. For example, the beginning of St. Patrick's mission is thus dated in the ancient chronicle:

"Patrick came to Ireland in the ninth year of Theodosius the younger, in the first year of the episcopate of Sixtus, forty-second bishop of the Roman Church." The Irish Nennius gives an Irish regnal date for this event—"the fifth year of King Loiguire."

It may be noted that this manner of dating lasted until our own time in the dating of the statutes of the English parliament.

Our present method of dating by a continuous era, giving each year its number in the series as its ordinary name, has this great convenience that we can calculate the space of years between two dated events by a simple subtraction. But if we find, to take an actual example from our oldest chronicle, that a certain event is dated in the ninth

year of the emperor Theodosius II, and another event in the second year of the emperor Phocas, then in order to calculate the distance of years between, we must first know the length of each imperial reign from Theodosius to Phocas. The old chroniclers were constantly at the trouble of making calculations of this kind, calculations to which certain errors were incidental. Small errors accumulating become great errors, and so as a safeguard and corrective, here and there in the chronicle, at the record of some important event, we find these summaries of years. In the year 664, a very destructive plague broke out in Ireland. To the record of the event, the chronicler adds: "From the death of Patrick, 203 years." So the seventh-century chronicler knew 461 as the year of Patrick's death.

There are various things that indicate that professed paganism continued to exist in Ireland in the second half of the sixth century, *i.e.* for a century at least after Saint Patrick's death. By that time, however, as I have shown in the sixth lecture, a blending of the old native culture and the newly introduced Christian learning had taken place. And just as two elements in the chemical sense unite to form something that seems to have a nature and virtue all its own and not derived from the quality of either component, so this blending of two traditions in Ireland brought forth almost a new nation, with a character and an individuality that gave it distinction in that age and in the after ages.

Mr. Romilly Allen, in his book on "Celtic Art," has something to the purpose. "The great diffi-

culty," he writes, "in understanding the evolution of Celtic art lies in the fact that, although the Celts never seem to have invented any new ideas, they professed an extraordinary aptitude for picking up ideas from the different peoples with whom war or commerce brought them into contact. And once the Celt had borrowed an idea from his neighbour, he was able to give it such a strong Celtic tinge that it soon became something so different from what it was originally as to be almost unrecognisable."

There is a mixture of truth and error in this statement that is characteristic of a great deal of modern scientific comment. For the explanation of a fact, something is offered which, upon close examination, is seen to be no more than the unexplained thing stated again in different terms. Why do masses of matter tend to approach each other? Because of the law of gravity. What do we mean by the law of gravity? We mean that masses of matter tend to approach each other.

It is to be seen from the quotation I have made that Mr. Romilly Allen starts with the idea of evolution. So does Professor Bury. His "Life of St. Patrick" is a sustained effort to prove that the singular chapter in the world's history opened by Saint Patrick's work in Ireland finds its explanation in this, that Saint Patrick was an evolved product, a resultant, a force naturally generated by the Roman Empire, of which Professor Bury is a distinguished historian. His "Life of St. Patrick" is designed to bring the singular and outstanding

phenomenon of Ireland in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, into the direct series of cause and effect with which the historian's greater work has dealt. He writes, he tells us, as one of "the children of reason." But the children of reason cannot explain water as the resultant of its known physical components, oxygen and hydrogen, or salt as the resultant of chlorine and sodium. The properties of water and salt, so long as these substances remain water and salt, are not the properties of their component substances or any combination thereof. In like manner the historian or the archæologist will set himself an impossible task if he undertakes to explain every fact of history or archæology as a sort of mechanical resultant of pre-existing forces.

What Romilly Allen says about the Celts is true of every people that has developed and maintained a distinctive nationality. The Romans themselves borrowed from Greece and from Etruria—but the resultant was neither Greece nor Etruria nor Greece plus Etruria nor any permutation or combination of Greek and Etruscan factors. The Greeks borrowed from Crete and Phœnicia, but no mere adding together of Cretan and Phœnician elements produced the Attic salt.

Herein lies the justification of nationality, of intense, distinctive and highly developed nationality. In it resides the elemental power of transformation. To it belongs the philosopher's stone. If the Greek people had possessed but a feeble individuality as a people, if they had resembled Cretans and Phœnicians and Persians, if they had not felt instinctively

that they had something precious in themselves, something that was worth Thermopylae, then it would never have been written in a later age that:

> Greece and her foundations are
> Built beneath the tide of war,
> Throned on the crystalline sea
> Of thought and its eternity.

In every intense and distinctive development of a nation, there dwells the actuality or the potentiality of some great gift to the common good of mankind; and I rejoice, I am sure we all rejoice, to see, in these days of clashing and crashing empires, that the clear idea of nationality, as if by the wonderful recreative power that is in nature, is rising in the esteem of good men all over the world, above and beyond the specious and seductive appeal of what has been called "the wider patriotism." In this regard, too, our own country in that most remarkable period of its history may furnish something of a model. With all the singularity of its insular character, it maintained the fullest intercourse with other countries, and its written mind exhibits no trace of those international prejudices and hatreds which, for whatever ends stimulated, are the disgrace of our modern civilisation.

We must not pretend that Ireland in that age was in a condition approaching ideal perfection. Far from it—the country was ruled by a patrician class to whom war was a sort of noble pastime. When we read of war in ancient Ireland, however, we must bear one thing in mind: a prolonged contest like that of the Leinster kings for the recovery

of Meath was altogether singular, and is not heard of from that time until the Norse invasions, three centuries later. A war, as a rule, meant a single battle, and in the early annals, which were written in Latin, the word *bellum*, which in Latin means a war, is always used to mean a single battle.

Though Christianity did not make the Irish desist from this kind of warfare, it certainly changed their outlook on warfare in general. Men who had taken part in bloodshed were excluded from the immediate precincts of the churches. In the wars carried on by the heathen Irish in other countries, the principal gain was in captives who were sold, like St. Patrick, into slavery. In his epistle to the soldiers of the British ruler Coroticus, St. Patrick condemns this practice along with the killing of non-combatants. "These soldiers," he writes, "live in death, the associates of Scots and Picts who have fallen away from the Faith, the slayers of innocent Christians. . . It is the custom of the Christians in Roman Gaul," he adds, "to send chosen men of piety with so much money to the Franks and other heathens, to ransom baptized captives. Thou slayest all, or sellest them to a foreign nation that knows not God. I know not what to say about the dead of the children of God upon whom the sword has fallen beyond measure. The Church deplores and bewails her sons and daughters whom the sword as yet hath not slain but who are carried far away and transported into distant lands, reduced to slavery, especially to slavery under the degraded and unworthy apostate Picts."

This, therefore, was also St. Patrick's teaching to the Irish; and in and after his time, not a single raiding expedition goes forth from Ireland. Kuno Meyer has shown that the military organisation of the Fiana still existed to some degree in early Christian Ireland; but it gradually disappears, and in the seventh century the Irish kings cease to dwell, surrounded by their fighting men, in great permanent encampments like Tara and Ailinn. In the eighth century, we hear the testimony of Bede, that the Irish are "a harmless nation, ever most friendly to the English."

Another change that came about, not suddenly, but gradually during this period, is the extinction of the old lines of racial demarcation in Ireland. The Church did not recognise these boundaries. Many noted ecclesiastics belonged to the old plebeian tribes.

In this connection, we may note one feature of the Irish secular law, not traceable to the influence of Christianity. The word *soer*, used as a noun, has two special meanings; it means a freeman and it means a craftsman. The contrary term *doer* means unfree—in the sense of serfdom rather than of slavery; there is a distinct term for "slave," viz., *mugh*. The plebeian communities are called *doer-thuatha*. The inference, therefore, is that a skilled craftsman of unfree race became by virtue of his craft a freeman.

Let us now take a cursory view of the course of political events during the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries, or rather, from the battle of

Ocha, which secured the monarchy for the descendants of Niall in 483, till the coming of the Norsemen in 793.

We have seen that the effect of the battle of Ocha was to exclude the Connacht branches of the monarchical family from the succession. The successful princes were a grandson and a great-grandson of Niall of the Nine Hostages; and these two princes, one of the Southern, the other of the Northern Ui Neill, became the next two kings of Ireland.

To understand this event more clearly, it is necessary to take a view of the Irish law of succession or inheritance. Under this law, a man's heirs were a family group called the *derbfine* or true family. At the head of this group was the great-grandfather of its youngest members, whether he happened to be dead or alive. The *derbfine* consisted of this family head, his sons, grandsons and great-grandsons—four generations. When the fifth generation came forward, the *derbfine* subdivided itself, forming a new set of similar groups, the head of each being one of the sons of the man who was head of the older group.

When a man died, all the living members of the *derbfine* to which he belonged became his heirs, and the inheritance, if capable of division, was divided among them in proportions fixed by law. Thus, if the deceased belonged to the third generation of the four which formed the *derbfine*, his heirs comprised all his grandfather's living descendants—*i.e.* his own children, his brothers and their children,

and his uncles and their children and grandchildren. In each case, the *derbfine* or group of heirs was ascertained by counting back to the great-grandfather of the youngest member and comprised all his descendants.

Kingship was not divisible, though it was a heritable property. When a man became king, then all male members of his *derbfine* became potential heirs to the kingship. Each member became capable of succession. For a man who thus came into the line of succession, there was a legal name—he was called *rigdamna*, "king-material," or in homely phrase, "the makings of a king." When a vacancy occurred, it was filled up by election from among those in this way qualified.

A glance at the genealogical tree (p. 193) will show how this law of succession influenced the action of the principals in the battle of Ocha. Muirchertach, king of Ailech, as the annals show, was the most active and daring of the Irish princes in his time. But neither his father nor his grandfather had held the high-kingship. If he himself failed to secure it, then the whole branch of the Northern Ui Néill ceased to have any lawful claim to the monarchy. He did not belong to the same *derbfine* as the reigning monarch Ailill Molt, but he was eligible to the monarchy because his great-grandfather, Niall, had held it. It was therefore his interest, and that of his kinsfolk in the north-west, to strike in, cut out the Connacht branch, and secure the potential succession for himself and his posterity. Not relying on his own power to effect this, he came to an understand-

ing with Luguid, king of the Southern Ui Néill, who belonged to his own *derbfine*. From the sequel, we may judge that the price of Luguid's adhesion was immediate succession to the monarchy. He became king of Ireland after the battle of Ocha, and Muirchertach became king of Ireland after him.

It is evident that this law of succession, a part of the ordinary law of inheritance, was, from the point of view of the public peace, a bad law. There were always branches of the ruling lines which, like the Northern Ui Neill in this instance, were on the point of falling outside of the group of eligibles; and the chiefs of these branches were always under the temptation to use violent measures, if they felt themselves strong enough, to retain the legal qualification in their own line.

In 534, Muirchertach died and was succeeded peacefully by Tuathal Maelgarb, another great-grandson of Niall. Contemporary with him, there was another of Niall's great-grandsons, Diarmait, whose father and grandfather had not reigned, and whose line therefore was in danger of exclusion from the monarchy. In 544, Tuathal was assassinated by a foster-brother of Diarmait, and Diarmait secured the monarchy. He is the last of the great-grandsons of Niall of whom we hear, and consequently the family of Niall ceases in his time to preserve its legal unity. From his death in 565 until the year 734, though the power and prestige acquired by the Ui Néill enabled them to keep the high-kingship among themselves, there is no regularity of succession. The Ui Neill held a number of small kingdoms

in Meath and western Ulster, and whatever king of them showed himself to be the strongest is recognised as king of Ireland.

The Northern Ui Neill, occupying a compact territory side by side, continued to hold together in political unity until the seventh century, their chief king being at one time of the line of Conall Gulban, at another time of the line of Eogan. In 563 they conquered from the Picts a belt of territory on the western side of the Bann, between Loch Neagh and the sea. This territory came into the possession of a branch of Eogan's line, represented in later times by the family of O'Catháin (O'Kane). In 615, we see the first appearance of a break in the unity of the Northern Ui Neill. Mael Chobo, of the line of Conall, was then their king and king of Ireland. He was overthrown in battle by Suibne Menn, king of Cenél Eogain, who then became king of Ireland. Thenceforward, Cenél Conaill and Cenél Eogain become rival powers in the North. Their rivalry lasted, with intervals, for a thousand years, until the battle of Kinsale in 1601, where it was a contributary cause of the final overthrow of both their houses. Cenél Eogain, from the position of its territory, held the advantage, and gradually extended its power eastward and southward over Ulster. Cenél Conaill on the other hand, holding the natural fastness of the Donegal Highlands, was never forced to take a permanently subordinate position.

Most modern writers on Irish history have accepted as historical the romantic story of the cursing

of Tara and its desertion during the reign of Diarmait. There is not a word about it in the ancient annals, though our earliest known chronicler wrote within half a century of the supposed event. A son of Diarmait, Aed Sláne, became king of Ireland, and died in 604, within the chronicler's time of writing which ends in 610. Aed Sláne shared the high-kingship with Colmán, king of the Northern Ui Neill, and the chronicle says expressly that "they ruled Tara in equal power." As late as the year 780, Tara was neither an accursed nor a deserted place, for in that year an ecclesiastical synod was held "in the town of Tara" (*in oppido Temro*). The extant stories of the cursing of Tara are all writings of the Middle Irish period, written centuries later than the supposed event. They tell us that the trouble began with the outlawry of Aedh Guaire, king of Ui Maine, who refused to submit to a quite unprecedented exercise of authority on the part of the monarch Diarmait. I have not been able to find this Aedh Guaire's name either in the annals or in the genealogy of Ui Maine, or anywhere except in this story. Aedh Guaire sought sanctuary. Diarmait violated the sanctuary. Twelve saints, called "the twelve apostles of Ireland," thereupon laid siege to Tara with fastings and curses, and Tara ceased to be the home of the monarchy. The annals show that some of these saints were dead at the time and others of them were still in their childhood. These so-called historical tales are seldom troubled about anachronisms. The celebrated "Colloquy with the Ancients" brings St. Patrick and Oisin into conversa-

tion with the same Diarmait. Apart from anachronisms, the story of the cursing has other features which should suffice to warn any reader from taking it for serious history.

The desertion of Tara does not stand alone, and can be explained without resort to imaginative tales of a later age. Cruachain, the ancient seat of the Connacht kings, and Ailinn, the ancient seat of the Leinster kings, were also abandoned during this period. It was military kings who ruled from these strongholds, surrounded by strong permanent military forces. My first visit to Tara convinced me that what we see there is the remains of a great military encampment. So it appeared or was known to the tenth-century poet Cinaed Ua h-Artacáin, whose poem on Tara begins with the words *Temair Breg, baile na fian*, "Tara of Bregia, home of the warrior-bands." When the booty and captives of Britain and Gaul ceased to tempt and recompense a professional soldiery, and when the old fighting castes became gradually merged in the general population, military organisation died out in Ireland, not to reappear until the introduction of the Gallo-glasses in the thirteenth century. That is one reason why Tara was deserted.

There is another and perhaps more cogent reason. Diarmait left his son, Colmán the Little, king over Midhe proper, *i.e.* Westmeath and most of King's County and County Longford; and another son, Aedh Sláne, before mentioned, king over Bregia, *i.e.* County Meath and parts of Louth and Dublin counties. This is a further instance of that process,

described in a former lecture, of creating mean lords. From these two kings sprang two distinct dynasties. Colmán's line, Clann Cholmáin, dominated the western territory; Aed Sláne's line, Síol Aeda Sláne, the eastern territory. The process of appropriation was continued in detail by their descendants. "Clann Cholmáin," says an ancient genealogist, "were distributed throughout Midhe so as to possess the lordship of every tuath and perpetual sovereignty over them." In like manner, an old genealogical poem relates the distribution of Aedh Sláne's descendants in lordship over various territories of Bregia.

The annals show that, between these two families so closely related, a fierce and bloody feud broke out, with continual reprisals, lasting for many years. Tara was in the possession of Aed Sláne's line. After the year 734, the kings of this line were excluded from the high-kingship, but nevertheless continued to hold undisputed authority over all Bregia, including Tara, until the close of the tenth century, when their dynasty was suppressed by the high-king Mael Sechnaill, who was also the chief of Clann Cholmáin. These facts quite sufficiently explain why, after 734, no king of Ireland could occupy Tara without an army.

The political affairs of southern Ireland during this period are remarkably tranquil and undiversified. In Munster, there was probably more abiding peace than in any equal extent of country in western Europe. The kings of Cashel appear to have steadily consolidated their authority and to have been con-

tent to do so without seeking to extend it beyond the bounds fixed in the fifth century. In the Book of Rights, the tributes payable to the king of Cashel far exceed those to which any of the other six principal kings in Ireland laid claim. There is an allegory related in the genealogies which indicates that at one time the supremacy of Cashel was challenged by the Eoghanacht kings of West Munster. This may have particular reference to one of these, Aedh Bennán, who died in 619, and who seems to have grouped under his own authority the western states in opposition to the king of Cashel. It is doubtful whether this ambition outlived him. His daughter, Mór Mhumhan ("Mór of Munster," as she is called), figures in ancient story. She became the wife of Fínghen, king of Cashel, and the ancestress of the most numerous family in Ireland, the O'Sullivans.

The most powerful of the kings of Cashel during this period was Cathal, who died in 742. The annals indicate that he held virtually equal authority with the contemporary high-kings. One of the prerogatives of the high-king was to preside over the Assembly of Taillte ("Teltown," near Navan). In 733, Cathal seems to have attempted to preside over this assembly, in the absence of the high-king Flaithbertach, who was engaged at the time in a losing struggle to preserve his own authority in the north-west. Cathal's attempt to preside over the high king's assembly was forcibly prevented by Domhnall, king of Midhe. In 734, Cathal appears to have secured the adherence or submission of the king of Ossory in an effort to extend his power over

Leinster; and a fierce battle ensued, in which the king of Ossory was killed and the king of Cashel escaped alive. In 737, a convention was held between Cathal and the high-king, Aedh Allán, at Terryglass in Ormond, and apparently an agreement was made between them securing the claim of the church of Armagh to revenue from all Ireland. In 738, Cathal again invaded Leinster and exacted hostages and a heavy contribution from the king of Naas. In view of all this, the name of Cathal was afterwards included by some southern writers in the list of monarchs of Ireland.

In Leinster, a factor against peace was the ancient claim of the high-kings to tribute from the Leinster kings. The origin of this tribute, called the Bóramha or "kine-counting," is explained by two different stories. Possibly it originated in the conquest of northern Leinster. The tribute was seldom conceded but to main force. To exact it at least once in a reign was a point of honour, a test of the monarch's authority; and an invasion of Leinster for that purpose is an almost regular item in the annals under the first or second year of each high-king.

The irregular succession to the monarchy ends in the year 734. In that year the high-king Flaithbertach, who was king of Tír Conaill, was compelled to abdicate by Aedh Allán, king of Cenél Eogain, who then became high-king. Flaithbertach retired into religious life at Armagh where he died thirty-one years later. From the year 734 until 1022, except for two interruptions, the succession to the high-

kingship was reserved to two dynasties, one at the head of the Northern Ui Néill, the other at the head of the Southern Ui Néill, to the kings of Ailech and Midhe; and these succeeded each other in the monarchy in regular alternation. There is no record of any express constitutional pact to secure the succession in this manner, but the alternation was a well recognised fact; and on this fact the medieval reconstructors of Irish history for the prehistoric period modelled part of their work—so that we read of an alternate sovereignty over Munster in remote antiquity, and of another alternate sovereignty, in which the Eoghanacht and the Dalcassians were the partners, at a later period; and the history of the monarchy is projected back to the first arrival of the Gaels in Ireland, by a device already alluded to, that is, by selecting names in turn out of the pedigrees of the principal dynasties.

It is not my purpose in these lectures to give a complete scheme of Irish history, allotting to each set of facts its due proportion of the discourse. My aim is rather to supplement what appears defective and correct what appears misleading in the treatment of early Irish history as the public has been accustomed to it. In regard of the great activity of religion and learning during the period between St. Patrick and the Norsemen, I shall not attempt to give even in summary what has been so eloquently described in detail by others, for example, by Archbishop Healy in his valuable work on "Ireland's Ancient Schools and Scholars," and, in the con-

tinental and missionary aspect, by Margaret Stokes. We have noted that the Irish civilisation of this period stands out so brightly from what are called the Dark Ages that it has commanded the special attention of an eminent historian of the Roman Empire, and evoked the resources of German scholarship. When I see the eulogist of Anglo-Norman feudalism in Ireland sitting in judgment upon the political institutions of a people which he has never studied and does not at all understand, I call to mind the estimate formed by "the ancient philosophers of Ireland" about Victorius of Aquitaine—that he was deserving of compassion rather than of ridicule. A barbarous people in "the tribal stage"—every item culled out that might suggest comparison with the head-hunters of New Guinea and the Hottentot—and beside this and in the midst of it schools everywhere, not schools but universities—books everywhere, "the countless multitude of the books of 'Eire,"—yes, we can still use the scrapings of our Irish vellum as a cure for the foreign snake-bite—and on the other hand, the pomp and circumstance of Feudalism, with its archiepiscopal viceroys, its incastellations and its subinfeudations, its charters and its statutes, its registers and its inquisitions, but during four centuries not one school of note, not even one, and one abortive university, no literature except the melancholy records of anti-national statecraft, and whatever learning there was for the most part suborned to the purposes of a dominating officialdom, just as in our own day we have seen the highest achievements of

science and invention suborned to the service of the war departments.

As regards the actual scope of Irish learning, at that period, our data are not sufficient to determine it. I do not know whether anyone has yet attempted to draw up a complete conspectus of the Latin literature that has been preserved in MSS. copied by Irish scribes, and of Latin authors quoted in ancient Irish books. In my opinion, the formation of a sane estimate of the Latin learning of that age, in the case of Ireland as of other countries, has been hindered by what I will call the intellectual snobbery of the Renaissance—an attitude of mind in which scholars think to dignify themselves by despising everything in Latin that was not written in the time of the first twelve Cæsars. It should not be ignored that for centuries after the fall of the Western Empire, though Latin existed among the common people only in the form of broken and breaking dialects, the Latin of the grammarians continued to be the language of thought and of education throughout the western half of Europe, and remained for the educated a truly living language. If it did not retain its classical elegance, it still had an unbroken vital tradition. Above all, the later Latin writings contain the contemporary record of the most progressive section of the human race in those times. I have often thought that I should like to see our universities break away from that sentiment of intellectual snobbery and open up opportunities for their students to become familiar with the late Latin literature. There can

be no doubt that it was this late Latin literature that was chiefly read in the ancient Christian schools of Ireland, and properly so, for its content was of more vital interest to their teachers and scholars than the matter of producing elegant yet artificial imitations of the Latin classics. In that later Latin and through its medium, Western Christendom was joined in an international common-wealth of mind. The Irish schools were familiar with works written in Spain like those of Orosius and St. Isidore, or in Gaul like those of St. Jerome and Victorius. Perhaps the intimacy and frequency of this intellectual intercourse is best illustrated in a letter written by the celebrated Alcuin no doubt from the palace school of Charlemagne, to Colgu, a professor in Clonmacnois, just before the ravages of the Norsemen began. "The writer complains that for some time past he was not deemed worthy to receive any of those letters 'so precious in my sight from your fatherhood,' but he daily feels the benefit of his absent father's prayers." Here we have clear testimony that, for personal correspondence, there existed a way of sending letters from Ireland to the Rhineland and receiving replies, approaching as near to a regular postal service as we could expect to find in that age. The sequence of the letter shows that the medium of this correspondence was merchant shipping engaged in trade between the two countries. Alcuin adds "that he sends by the same messenger an alms of fifty sicles of silver from the bounty of King Charles (*i.e.* Charlemagne) and fifty more from his own resources for the brotherhood. He also

sends a quantity of olive oil . . . and asks that it may be distributed amongst the Bishops in God's honour for sacramental purposes."

And what about Greek? Much has been written about the singular knowledge of Greek possessed by Irish scholars and their pupils of other nationalities in the time of Charlemagne and thereabouts. Zimmer in particular has laid great stress on this proposition. Some years ago, I went one day to look for help from Professor Corcoran in something I was trying to work out. I found him in his room, busy with his students. I retreated, but he called me back. "We are discussing," he said, "the question of the knowledge of Greek in the ancient Irish schools. You have come in a good time to let us know your view about it." "Well," I said, "I cannot claim to have examined the matter at all. I know that some remarkable things have been said about it. I can only claim to have formed a general impression from what I have observed." "Will you let us know what impression you have formed?" "Certainly," I said. "My impression is that such evidences of a knowledge of Greek as have been found are well enough explained as the outcome of the teaching of Greek in Canterbury by Archbishop Theodore." Since that time, Mr. Mario Esposito has discussed the matter at length in "Studies," and his conclusion is that the knowledge of Greek in those Irish schools was very meagre indeed and mainly or wholly based on mere vocabularies. Kuno Meyer, I think, disagreed with this conclusion. I can remember that Mr. Esposito's treatment of the question

jarred on me to some extent—I thought his argument was too sharp in some places and too flat in others. Nevertheless, I think he was in the right on the main point. Knowledge of a language means either conversational knowledge or textual knowledge or both together. I certainly could not name a single Greek author who was textually known in the Irish schools—on the evidence; and I know no evidence of the conversational use of Greek in those schools. It may have been in them for a time. Bede, a contemporary, says that Theodore's pupils learned to speak Greek with fluency. Theodore was in Canterbury from 664 till 690, and it is very likely that Irishmen would go there to learn from him. But notwithstanding Bede's testimony, it does not appear that Theodore's teaching had the effect of establishing the study of Greek on any permanent basis in England, not to say in Ireland.

Without making any claim that does not rest on unquestionable evidence, there is enough to show that during the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, Ireland, enjoying freedom from external danger and holding peaceful intercourse with the other nations, made no inglorious use of her opportunity. The native learning and the Latin learning throve side by side. The ardent spirit of the people sent missionary streams into Britain and Gaul, western Germany and Italy, even to farthest Iceland. And among all this world-intercourse there grew up the most intense national consciousness. It pleases me to see a certain school of writers say certain things, so that the truth may be established by its opposite.

"The Irishman's country," I read, "was the *tuath* or territory belonging to his tribe. . . The clansman, while ready to lay down his life for his chief, felt no enthusiasm for a national cause. The sentiment for 'country' in any sense more extended than that of his own tribal territory, was alike to him and to his chief unknown." The implication is that, in the twelfth century, to which these words refer, the statement made in them is, in the first place, true of the Irishman, and in the second place, especially and peculiarly true of the Irishman. If it be peculiarly or especially true of the Irishman, then the writer, Mr. Orpen, has in mind other nationalities about which the same could not be stated. What and where were they? Suppose we read instead, "The feudal vassal's country was the fief or territory belonging to his lord. . . . The vassal, while ready to lay down his life for his lord, felt no enthusiasm for a national cause. The sentiment for 'country' in any sense more extended than that of his own feudal territory, was alike to him and to his lord unknown." Would this be untrue of England, France, Germany, or Italy in the twelfth century? If quite applicable to all these countries, why is it so particularly and specially said about the Irishman? For what purpose? To what end? Is it to bring out historical truth? What is the motive? What is the objective?

The fact is that, while the statement is true in a limited sense about Ireland, it is not especially and peculiarly true, as its writer would have himself believe, about Ireland, and it is less true about Ire-

land than about any country in western Europe at that period—the twelfth century. You will not find anywhere in Europe during that age any approach towards the definite and concrete sense of nationality —of country and people in one—which is the common expression of the Irish mind in that age. Beginning with the sixth century chronicle, every Irish history is a history of Ireland—there is not one history of a tribal territory or of any grouping of tribal territories. Every Irish law-book is a book of the laws of Ireland—there are no territorial laws and no provincial laws. The whole literature is pervaded by the notion of one country common to all Irishmen. So far as Mr. Orpen's statement is concerned with the expression of historical truth, it has this much of truth—that neither in Ireland nor in any other country was the modern sentiment of political nationality fully formed in the popular mind. Mr. Orpen goes on to contrast Irish localism with the centralised monarchies of Europe. Let us hope he does not imagine that any one of those centralised monarchies was the expression of the sentiment of country in the popular mind or in the mind of the ruler. It is true that the sentiment of country sometimes obtained its delimitation from centralised power—but the sentiments which found expression in centralised power were those of fear on the one side and domination on the other; and students who study medieval history with a map will quickly apprehend that these two sentiments, fear and domination, shaped the boundaries of country in defiance of the sentiments connected with country,

race, language, nationality. In Ireland, on the other hand, we find the clear development of the national consciousness, associated with the country, to a degree that is found nowhere else. Just as we must reject the ridiculous notion that the Irish were a perverse people, with a double dose of original sin, and therefore a people about whom the more incredible are the things said the more worthy they are of belief; so, too, we must avoid the contrary extreme and refrain from insisting that everything in ancient Ireland was perfect, deriving this perfection from the angelic virtue of the national character. In Ireland it was impossible to escape the sentiment of country. So an ancient poet figured to himself that the first poem in the Irish language began thus: "I invoke the land of Ireland." Another poet puts this sentiment in the mouth of Columba—

> Here is a grey eye
> that looks back to Ireland
> an eye that never more shall see
> Ireland's men nor her women.

Now, Columba's "tribal territory" was Tír Conaill. Again, Columba is supposed to say—

> Gaedheal! Gaedheal! beloved name—
> My one joy of memory is to utter it.

But Columba's clan was the Ui Néill—not the Gaedhil. Shall we be told that national sentiment was an esoteric doctrine of the poets; that in lines like these, they were not appealing to the sense of country which they knew to be in the minds of their audience, but were seeking subtly to indoctrinate

with a nationalism peculiar to themselves a public which could only think of tribal chiefs and tribal territories? Well and good. In what other country of that age was there even a small class of the people who held and expressed this definite sentiment of country? A Leinster poet sings the glories of the Curragh of Kildare and the royal fortress of Ailinn —seat of the Leinster kings; but in the middle of this theme, he says, "Greater than telling at every time hath been God's design for Ireland"; can this expression be paralleled in the literature of any other country in that age? Or let us look at the words with which Gilla Coemáin begins a metrical list of the Irish monarchs:

> High 'Eire, island of the kings,
> illustrious scene of mighty deeds—

These are only casual examples that rise to the mind. The plain truth is this—and the writer who denies it does so because he has set out to write a political pamphlet in the guise of history—that, notwithstanding an extensive intercourse with neighbouring and distant peoples, and notwithstanding an extremely decentralised native polity, the Irish people stand singular and eminent in those times, from the fifth century forward, as the possessors of an intense national consciousness.

IX. THE STRUGGLE WITH THE NORSEMEN

THE Norsemen or Northmen were the people of Norway, Sweden and Denmark. They always call themselves Northmen. This implies that they regarded themselves as being the northern branch of a larger people—and that larger people can only have been the Germans. Northmen means North Germans. On their first appearance on the Irish and Scottish coasts, the Irish called them simply "the Heathens"—Genti: all the other peoples with whom the Irish came in contact at that time being Christians. Afterwards they were called in Irish *Lochlannaigh*. The origin of this name is unknown. Professor Marstrander thinks it must mean the men of Rogaland, an old division of Scandinavia.

The Norse invasions are seen to go through several phases. In the first phase, the islands and coasts are fiercely devastated, and the Northmen make away again with their booty and captives, or hold the captives to ransom. In the second phase, they occupy islands and outlying forelands. They are thus able to gather strong bands and plan out incursions into the interior. These two phases cover about half a century, from 790 to 840. Gradually the leaders are learning the geography of Ireland, especially of its harbours and navigable rivers.

The rapid development of these raiding enterprises has been explained as caused by political changes in Norway. But these changes did not take place until about eighty years after the Norse raids began. They amounted to a strong centralisation under king Harald the Fairhaired and a diminution of the power of the nobles; and they were perhaps rather a consequence than a cause of the raiding movement. We have seen how, some five centuries earlier, an almost similar outbreak of raiding activity brought the Irish into touch with Roman Britain and Gaul, and how the rewards of plunder enabled Irish kings to maintain a permanent military organisation and to acquire thereby much greater power, leading to a depression of the old nobility. I think it likely that the chief cause of the Norse movement of invasion was the development of a particularly suitable style of ship-building; the building of long undecked ships of light draft and very strong construction, very seaworthy; in which, during a sea-fight, every man could take a hand.

The third phase was the occupation of inland waters. The invaders ran their ships, which were propelled by oars as well as by sails, up the navigable rivers, if necessary dragging them overland where the navigable parts were interrupted by shallow rapids, for example on the Bann and the Shannon. Thus they could place a whole fleet on a lake like Loch Neagh or Loch Ree. There they were safe from attack and were in a position to choose the place on a large shoreline for their incursions. It

is to be borne in mind that, during the period of the Norse wars in Ireland and for some centuries before and after it, the Irish had no permanent military organisation. Their largest military operations never extended beyond a few weeks. Their fighting men were called out for the purpose from their ordinary peaceful occupations, and could not lawfully be held to military service for more than a few weeks in any year. Thus there was no effective means of fighting down a hostile force encamped on its ships in a large inland water. It was by a crafty lure, we are told, that Turgesius, commander of the Norse fleet on the Shannon, was captured.

The fourth phase was the occupation of a fortified station on some haven, so that the ships, drawn up on land, were secure from attack. The earliest of these Norse stations in Ireland were at Dublin and at Annagassan in Co. Louth. Annagassan, now a mere hamlet, was a port of note in ancient times. Its sandy estuary suited the shipping of that age. Irish folk-tales still describe the old way of bringing ships to land in such places. The ships were of very light draft. Those made in Ireland had the strong framework covered with hides not planks. They were run ashore in a sandy rivermouth and dragged up on land beyond the reach of the tide. What gave Annagassan importance was that at this point the old great northern highway, the Slighe Midh-luachra, touched the coast. It is in describing the fortified stations of the Norsemen at Dublin and Annagassan, in the annals under the year 841, that we first find the Irish term *long-phort*. This word,

about seventy years afterwards, has come to mean an entrenched or stockaded position for an army, a fortified camp; and its use in this sense shews us what was the character of these first Norse stations on the Irish mainland.

The occupation of these fortified stations enabled the invaders to accumulate force for strong expeditions overland. Such expeditions were soon undertaken with success.

Dublin was well chosen. The Liffey here was the boundary between two of the greater kingdoms—Leinster and Bregia. The Norsemen of Dublin were thus in a position to take advantage of the ancient hostility between the Leinstermen and the Ui Néill who had wrested the plain of Meath from Leinster and imposed a hated tribute on the Leinster kings. So, as a rule, we find the Norse of Dublin and the kings of Leinster in close alliance.

The Irish annals indicate an earlier date for the centralising policy of the kings of Norway than Norwegian historians seem to accept. In 849, they tell us, eight years after the occupation of Dublin, the king of Norway (Lochlainn) sent a fleet to establish his authority over the Norse settlers in Ireland; and four years later, in 853, they say that Olaf, whom they call son of the king of Lochlainn, assumed kingship over the Norsemen in Ireland. He became joint king of Dublin with Ivar.

Soon after this, in 856 and 857, the Gall-Ghaedhil or Norse-Irish, make their appearance in various parts of the island—in Meath and Ulster and Munster. These were the people of the generation following the

Norse occupation of the Scottish islands and the Isle of Man. They spoke a broken Irish and no doubt also a broken Norse dialect.

In 851, a new variety of Norsemen arrives on the Irish coast. They are called the Black Heathens, the Black Foreigners, the Black Lochlannachs, in contradistinction to the Fair Heathens, Fair Foreigners, or Fair Lochlannachs who had been here before them. The Welsh chronicle, the Annales Cambriae, makes it fairly clear that these Black Heathens were the Danes. They came in hostility to the Norwegians, with whom they fought fierce battles; and we have already seen that for a number of years the Danes held the chief power in the Hebrides.

At this point of time, about the middle of the ninth century, the Norsemen must have seemed to be about to become masters of all northern Europe from the west of Ireland to the banks of the Volga. England was crumbling under their attacks. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells how Norse armies marched up and down through the country without resistance, then moved off to the Continent. They occupied Ghent in Flanders for a year. They defeated the Franks in battle and supplied themselves with horses from their captures, pushed up the Meuse into France, excamped there for another year; went up the Scheldt to Condé and sat there for a year; up the Somme to Amiens, and sat there for a year. Then up the Seine, and took up their winter quarters beside Paris. Then the "army went up through the bridge at Paris, and thence up

along the Seine as far as the Marne, and thence up the Marne to Cheny, and then sat down, there and on the Yonne, two winters in the two places." Then they crossed from the Seine to the borders of Brittany, where the Bretons attacked and defeated them, driving them into their ships, which apparently had been sent round by sea to co-operate with them. Turning again eastward they were defeated next year in Germany, but held together in France for two years more, when they came down to Boulogne, and finding shipping for their whole force, including horses, crossed over to England in two hundred and fifty ships, Alfred being then king in England. Afterwards they crossed England, passing up the Thames and then up the Severn. Alfred, assisted by the Welsh, defeated them. They fell back on Essex, mustered fresh forces there, once more crossed England and laid siege to Chester, invaded Wales and were driven out of it. Some settled down in the conquered lands of East Anglia and Northumbria, the rest made a fresh expedition into France. Though Alfred was a great and admirable king, and justly held up to renown in English history, he could do no more than hold a minor part of England against these invaders, and at his death in 901 they were undisputed masters of about two thirds of that country.

Several causes operated in checking the growth of Norse power. One was the rivalry between the Danes and the Norwegians. Another was the consolidation of Scotland under Cinaeth Mac Ailpin. A third cause undoubtedly was the tenacious resist-

ance of the "Celts." Had the Norsemen been as successful in Scotland and Ireland, Wales and Brittany, as they were in England and Normandy, Harald the Fair might have been the head of a new empire. The annals give a long list of pitched battles in Ireland, in some of which the invaders were victorious but for the most part they were defeated. Mr. Orpen ascribes their failure to the fact that the Irish were not politically centralised and were therefore harder to break down; yet he goes on to censure this defect in the Irish polity. Are we to conclude that it was a misfortune for Ireland and other countries that Ireland was not subjugated by the Scandinavian Heathens?

As a matter of fact, it was under the personal command of the high-king, Aedh Finnliath, that the Irish resistance took a definitely successful turn. In 866, this king captured all the strongholds of the Norsemen in the northern half of Ireland; and from this time on, they made no settlements to the north of Dublin and Limerick. Olaf and Ivar, the two kings of Dublin, turned their arms against Britain. In 870, as already related, after a siege of four months, they captured the last stronghold of the northern Britons at Dumbarton. In recording the death of Ivar in 873, the Irish annals entitled him "king of the Norsemen of Ireland and Britain."

Ireland, however, was not at peace from the invaders. Under the same year, 873, we find a characteristic entry in the annals. I have already said that those who resort to these chronicles for a

record of the normal affairs of Ireland mistake the character of the record and expose themselves to deception. One of the institutions connected with the Irish monarchy was the "Fair" or Assembly of Taillte near Navan. This was considered to be the principal assembly in Ireland, and to preside over it was a function of the king of Ireland. Yet during more than four centuries before this year 873, the Assembly is only five times mentioned, and in each instance it is not the normal fact but an abnormal incident that is recorded. In the year 717, the Assembly was disturbed by Foghartach, king of Bregia. Foghartach was a claimant to the high-kingship. In 714, he was deposed and exiled to Britain. In 716, he is recorded as reigning again. His disturbance of the Assembly of Taillte in the following year marks therefore an attempt on his part to assert his position as monarch. The effective high-king at the time was Fergal, king of Ailech. In 733, Cathal, king of Munster, made a similar attempt to preside, and was prevented by the king of Meath. After this event, there is no mention of the Assembly until 811. In that year, the Ui Néill having done something in violation of the sanctuary rights of the monastery of Tallaght near Dublin, the monastic authorities placed the Assembly under an interdict. The high-king nevertheless proceeded to hold it. He was Aedh Oirdnidhe, king of Ailech; and so we see that whether the monarch had his domestic realm in Meath or in the far North, it was equally his custom to preside over this Assembly. He failed to hold the Assembly. In face of

the ban "neither horse nor chariot came thither." And the violated sanctuary of Tallaght received reparation after this in the form of many gifts.

In 827, the Assembly was broken up "against the Gailings" by the high-king Conchobor. The explanation of this event is possibly that the high-king failed to hold the Assembly, being preoccupied with the hostile activities of the Norsemen who in that year were plundering, burning and wasting the Bregian seaboard, not far from Taillte; also with the equally troublesome activities of Feidlimid, king of Cashel, about whom there is more to be said. The Gailings, whose territory lay close by, were loth to be deprived of the customary celebration, and attempted to hold the Assembly on their own account, but were forcibly prevented by the high-king.

In 831, the annals record a disturbance in the courts of the Assembly, owing to some dispute regarding reliquaries of St. Patrick and St. MacCuilinn of Lusk, the reliquaries no doubt being brought there for the purpose of administering oaths in litigation.

Let it not be thought that the silence of the annals in other years is compatible with the absence of the unrecorded event. The entry of the year 873 puts this possibility out of question. It says: "The Assembly of Taillte is not held, in the absence of just and worthy cause, a thing which we have not heard to have befallen from ancient times." Nevertheless, that there was sufficient cause in the disturbed condition of the country owing to the Norse

wars is made evident, for the chronicler has to record the abandonment of the Assembly three years later, in 876, when again he denies a just and worthy cause; and again in the second year after that, in 878, without just and worthy cause. When we come to 888, we are told only that the Assembly fell through. This is repeated in 889, and then, when the failure to hold the Assembly becomes annual and, so to speak, normal, the annalist ceases to record it. The next we hear of this institution is in 916, and once more it is the unwonted thing that is chronicled. In that year, the Assembly of Taillte was restored by the high-king, Niall Glúndubh. Hence it would appear that the half-century preceding 916 was the period during which the disturbance of normal conditions in Ireland reached its maximum; and this is also the period of maximum activity for the Norsemen in neighbouring countries.

Aedh Finnliath died in the monastery of Dromiskin in 879. Dromiskin is in Co. Louth, near the seacoast, and the fact that it was there the high-king "fell asleep," *i.e.* died a peaceful death in religious retirement, testifies to his success in checking the menace of the Norsemen in northern Ireland. He was succeeded in the monarchy, according to the custom of alternation, by Flann Sinna, king of Meath.

In the meantime, the power of the kings of Cashel continued to increase. It is a remarkable thing that at least four kings of Cashel during this period were ecclesiastics. These were 'Olchobor, who died

in 796, a scribe and a bishop; Feidlimid, who reigned from 820 to 847, described in his obit as "scribe and anchorite," but in an earlier annal he is mentioned as carrying his crozier to battle; Cormac, the learned bishop, who fell in battle in 908; and Flaithbertach, the chief cause of Cormac's tragedy, who was abbot of Inis Cathaigh, afterwards became king of Cashel, abdicated or was deposed, and died in 944. The career of Feidlimid reads like that of a Heathen king of Norsemen. There are some churchmen who stand upon the letter of the law, and consider themselves thereby entitled to do things that are hard to reconcile with the spirit. Feidlimid began his reign by proclaiming the Law of Patrick over Munster, *i.e.* by enforcing there the primatial claims of Armagh. In the same year he burned the monastery of Gallen, a foundation of the Britons in the west of Meath, destroying all its dwelling places and its oratory. Three years later, in 826, he led the army of Munster into the same district and wasted it. In 827 the king of Ireland, Conchobor, met him in convention at Birr; this indicating that the two kings were on terms of equality. In 830, he was again burning and wasting over his borders in Meath and Connacht. In 831, he appeared at the head of an army of Munster and Leinster in Bregia. In 833, he attacked Clonmacnois, slaughtered its monks and burned its termon-lands up to the church gates; then handled the monastery of Durrow in the same fashion. In 836, he attacked Kildare, then a purely ecclesiastical and monastic settlement, and finding the abbot and

other dignitaries of Armagh there on visitation, he carried them off as captives, no doubt holding them to ransom. Next year he again invaded Connacht, and in 838 another king of Ireland met him in convention at Cloncurry, and doubtless came to terms with him; in 840 he attacked Meath, Bregia, and Connacht, and exacted the hostages of Connacht; in 841, the year in which the Norsemen established themselves at Dublin, Feidlimid with his army encamped on Tara. This, along with his taking the hostages of Connacht, shows that his aim was to secure the high-kingship. In the same year he marched to Carman, near Mullaghmast; Carman was the assembly-place of the kings of Leinster, and Feidlimid no doubt wished to preside and so assert his sovereignty over Leinster. This time, however, he overstretched his power. The reigning high-king, Niall, came in force against him and drove him out, and a poem on this event says that in his flight the vigil-keeping Feidlimid left his crozier behind. After this check, he is not further heard of until his death in 847. In his obit he is called by the northern chronicler "optimus Scottorum," the best man of the Irish. His reign exhibits the high-water mark of the power of the Eoghanacht kings of Munster.

After 500 years of undisputed sovereignty in Munster, the Eoghanacht dynasty of Cashel reached a turning point in the battle of Belach Mugna in 908. In that year, urged on by Flaithbertach, abbot of Inis Cathaigh, an eligible prince and afterwards king of Cashel, king Cormac, the bishop, invaded Leinster. The high-kings of the line of Niall regarded the

Leinster kings as their own choice vassals and jealously reserved to themselves the privilege of exacting homage and tribute from Leinster. We have seen how a high-king allowed a king of Cashel to plunder and harry in Connacht and Meath, and interfered with effect only when the Assembly of Carman and the sovereignty of Leinster were involved. So it befel with Cormac. Advancing through Ossory he compelled the king of Ossory to join forces with him, and crossing the Barrow they were confronted by the Leinster king and his army. They encamped for the night, prepared to do battle on the morrow. Flann Sinna, the high-king, must have been well warned, for when the morning came, the Munster army found not only the Leinstermen against them in front, but the high-king and the king of Connacht coming upon their left flank. The king of Ossory attempted to retreat but was cut off and killed. The battle became a rout. King Cormac was unhorsed and beheaded. Two Munster abbots fell in the slaughter. The abbot of Inis Cathaigh escaped.

A graphic account of this expedition, with all the appearance of authentic detail, is found in a book of annals apparently compiled at Durrow in Ossory. The memory of King Cormac was held afterwards in great veneration. To him is ascribed the compilation of the Irish glossary that bears his name, also of the Psalter of Cashel and the Book of Rights. The Psalter of Cashel survives only in excerpts and quotations, and to judge from these it was a collection of historical and genealogical matter. Of the Book of Rights, Professor Ridgeway once said to

me that it was the most remarkable state document produced by any European country outside of the Byzantime empire in that age. We must consider its character and content on a later occasion.

This tragic battle, fought in the year 908, ended the long-established prestige of the Cashel dynasty. Six years afterwards, in 914, the Norsemen took possession of Waterford without opposition; and still six years later, in 920, they took possession of Limerick. Until these years, they had gained no foothold on the land of Munster. Another result of the weakening of the Eoghanacht power was the rapid rise of the Dalcassian kings.

Closely connected with the events of this time, a thousand years ago, was the remarkable story of Queen Gormlaith. She was daughter of the king of Ireland, Flann Sinna. Apparently she had been betrothed to Cormac, king of Cashel. He having become an ecclesiastic, Gormlaith was given in marriage to Cearbhall, king of Leinster, the same Cearbhall, victor over Cormac at Belach Mugna, to whose sword an ode written by a Leinster poet is preserved in the Book of Leinster. The Ossory collection of annals, which differs from the ordinary chronicles in expanding into narrative, tells that Cearbhall, wounded in the battle, lay long a-healing, and that once, as the queen sat on the couch at his feet, he boasted rudely over the death of Cormac. Gormlaith reproached him for his disrespect to the memory of so good a king. Her husband, remembering that she had been promised wife to Cormac, became enraged, and with his foot cast the queen

from the couch to the floor. Thus affronted in the presence of others, Gormlaith left her husband and went back to her father. Flann refused to receive her, not desiring a quarrel with the king of Leinster. Gormlaith then sought protection from Niall Glúndubh, king of Ailech. Cearbhall died of his wounds the year after the battle, and Niall married Gormlaith. On the death of Flann in 916, Niall became king of Ireland.

I have shown that the annals are a record of abnormal rather than of normal matters. Another character of the annals is that they are in the main an aristocratic and personal record, having chief regard to great personages in Church and State and to the personal aspect of events as they concerned these magnates. A good exemplification of this feature of the annals is shown in the record of king Flann's death. It says: "Flann, son of Mael Sechnaill, king of Tara, who reigned thirty-six years, six months, and five days, died in the sixty-eighth year of his age, on Saturday, the 25th of May, about the hour of 1 *p.m.*" So Gormlaith, daughter of a king of Ireland, chosen to be queen of Munster, became queen of Leinster, then queen of Ailech, and lastly queen of Ireland. There is an old poem which represents her standing by the grave of her husband Niall and commanding a monk not to set his foot upon that clay. She died in religious retirement in 948, forty years after the battle of Belach Mugna.

In the first year of his reign as king of Ireland, 916, Niall Glúndubh, as already told, restored the Assembly of Taillte. In the following year, 917, he

marched against the Norsemen of Waterford. They came out to meet him. An indecisive action was fought. Then both armies fortified themselves in the field, anticipating the modern manner of warfare, and remained thus face to face for three weeks. Niall meanwhile sent to the king of Leinster requesting him to attack the Norsemen from that side. The Norsemen, however, did not wait for this attack. Keeping enough force to hold their position against Niall, they sent their main body to meet the Leinstermen, whom they completely defeated. The place of this encounter is named Cenn Fuait, and was absurdly identified by O'Donovan with Confey in Co. Kildare, apparently on the principle that there is an M in Macedon and also in Monmouth. The battle must have taken place close to Waterford Harbour on the Leinster side. Other editors of the annals content themselves with repeating O'Donovan's conjecture as authentic. After this failure, Niall withdrew, and the Norsemen held Waterford from that time until the Norman invasion.

Next year 918, Niall opened war on the Norsemen of Dublin. That is just 1000 years ago. The following year, 919, he led an army against Dublin. The Norsemen met him on the north bank of the Liffey at Islandbridge. Niall was defeated and mortally wounded. This battle is sometimes called the battle of Dublin, sometimes the battle of Cell-mo-Shámhóg, from a church in the vicinity The latter name furnished O'Donovan with the occasion for another conjectural identification, which other editors have blindly followed. He made Cell-mo-Shámhóg to be

the same as Kilmashogue, six or seven miles from Dublin on the south side and among the hills. A little reflection would have assured these editors that, just as a Leinster army coming to the relief of an army near Waterford was not likely to encounter the Norse of Waterford in the north of Leinster, so also an army from northern Ireland was not likely to meet the Norsemen of Dublin in the mountains to the south of Dublin. For the full identification of the battle site, the student may refer to the name Cell Mo Shámóc in Father Hogan's Onomasticon.

From Niall Glúndubh the O'Neills of Tyrone derive their surname and descent.

The Norsemen were now no longer the ferocious heathens of their earlier record. Most of them had adopted Christianity. Intermarriages between them and the Irish were quite frequent. Their towns soon developed into trading communities, though it is clear enough from Norse documents that a Norse trading ship went to sea well prepared to make gains by less patient methods than buying and selling. Wexford seems to have been pre-eminently a trading settlement, and the first part taken by the Wexford Norsemen in Irish wars was apparently the defence of their town against the Anglo-Normans. With their Irish neighbours they lived in peace and security. In the tenth century the Norse settlements in Ireland became part of the Irish body politic, and if they went to war in Ireland, as often as not, it was in alliance with one Irish king against another. There were still incursions of the Norsemen of outlying parts, the Isle of Man, Galloway,

the Hebrides, etc., and in Ireland the struggle takes the form of resistance to these invaders, under a number of leaders of note. One of these leaders, Cellachán of Cashel, king of Munster, has a saga all to himself, but I think the story contains more than history. Some of its striking events, which we might expect to find recorded in the chronicles, find no place in them. However that may be, Cellachán's activity against the Norsemen is the last glory of the Cashel dynasty, the flame that shoots up from the candlestick before the candle goes out. Already the Dalcassian line was preparing to take the place of the declining Eoghanacht power in Munster. In the year 944, the father of Brian Bóramha, Cennétig, king of Dál gCais, with the title of king of Thomond or North Munster, gave battle to Cellachán, but was defeated. Brian was born in 941, three years before this battle. Cellachán died in 954.

In northern Ireland at this time the head of resistance to the Norsemen was Muirchertach, son of the high-king Niall Glúndubh who fell in the battle of Dublin. A list of his victories is given, a century after his time, by the poet-historian Flann of Monasterboice. Among them is mentioned an expedition by sea against the Norsemen of the Hebrides —it is also mentioned in the genealogies but not in the contemporary annals. The annals on the other hand record that in 939 Muirchertach was captured in Ailech and carried off by the Norsemen to their ships but was immediately ransomed. The event shows that Ailech, one of the great prehistoric stone fortresses, was still occupied in the tenth century by

the kings who took their title from it. Especially interesting in Muirchertach's career are his relations with the high king Donnchadh. In the ordinary course of the alternate succession, Muirchertach, as king of Ailech, was the designated successor in the high-kingship to Donnchadh, who was king of Meath. At times he appears prepared to dispute the authority of Donnchadh, at other times he is active in upholding it. His most remarkable action is what is known as his Circuit of Ireland, in 941, briefly noticed in the Annals but described at length in a poem by Cormacán Éces, who accompanied the expedition. With a picked force, said to number 1000, Muirchertach marched through all the principal kingdoms of Ireland, and exacted hostages from each king. In Cashel, he took the king himself, Cellachán, as a hostage. The Dalcassians alone stood off, and after four days marching here and there in their territory, Muirchertach passed on to Connacht without the hostages of Dál gCais.

The fact of this expedition illustrates what I have already said, that, from the sixth to the thirteenth century, there was no military organisation in Ireland. The hostages were brought to Ailech and there hospitably entertained by the king and queen for some weeks, after which Muirchertach, so to speak, regularised his position in the matter by handing over all the hostages to the high king Donnchadh.

Two years later, in 943, Muirchertach fell in battle with the Norsemen near Dundalk. The high king Donnchadh died in the following year, 944. In the

ordinary course of the alternate succession, he should have been succeeded by the king of Ailech, but Muirchertach's death left this kingship either disputed or divided, and the high-kingship was assumed by Congalach, king of Bregia, who reigned for twelve years and fell in battle with the Norsemen. This reign of Congalach is the only breach in the alternate monarchy between the years 734 and 1002.

The kingdom of Dál gCais occupied the eastern half of the present county of Clare. Its prominence dates from the time of Lorcán, grandfather of Brian. Being a border state, it was able to form relations of mutual advantage with the border states of Connacht, with Aidne, Ui Maine, and the Delbna. In the wars between Mathgamain and the Limerick Norsemen, the Delbna were his allies. The kings of Aidne and Ui Maine, Connacht states, were allies of Brian, and gave their lives, as he did, on the great day of Clontarf.

The killing of Mathgamain in 976 appears in later writings in a more odious light than it could have appeared to contemporaries. We can recognise that the ancient Eoghanacht dynasty of Cashel, which Mathgamain overthrew, had already lost its prestige and was no longer able to rule and protect Munster. It has always happened in the world's history, and is probably happening to-day, that institutions and established powers appear to contemporary people to be full of vigour and likely to last, whereas to people of a later time it is clear that they resembled the hollow tree awaiting the blast that was to lay it low. To the Eoghanacht princes who compassed the

death of Mathgamain, he was the successful usurper who had broken into the ancient right of their kindred and held it by the strong hand.

With regard to Brian, there are some noteworthy things to be said which even enthusiastic eulogists have ignored. Brian had one or two ideas which, in the Ireland of his time, were revolutionary. He had the idea of a more centralised authority than any Irish king in history before him had attempted to create. To this end, he designed holding in permanent garrison a number of fortified places in various parts of Munster. This design is clearly expressed in a poem added in his time, and no doubt under his direction, to the Book of Rights; and the annals show that he endeavoured to give effect to it.

Brian had also definite notions on the subject of what in our time is called sovereign independence. This is one of many matters about which we must be on our guard against thinking the present back into the past—an obvious precaution yet one which many writers on Irish history have neglected. It can be shown, and it would have interested Professor Bury had he known it, that from the earliest Irish chronicle, from the sixth century, down to the eleventh or twelfth century, the dominant idea in Ireland with regard to international relations was this—that as in Ireland there were many little States and over them all, in primacy rather than in operative authority, there was a chief king, the monarch of Ireland, so in the world there were many kingdoms and over all these a chief king whom Irish writers

called the king of the world. This idea was adopted from Latin historians, especially from St. Jerome and Orosius. In our earliest histories, the emperor reigning at Constantinople was regarded as king of the world. A metrical list of the kings of the world from Noah's Flood down to the eighth century was written by the poet-historian Flann of Monasterboice, who died in 1056. The prevalence of this idea probably facilitated Henry of Anjou in obtaining the submission of the Irish princes. The annals, in relating Henry's arrival in Ireland in 1171 and his departure in 1172, say nothing about the papal grant, but describe Henry as "the son of the Empress." The same idea lingered in western Europe down to the time of the emperor Charles V, and was the cause of no small anxiety to the mind of Henry VIII, with all his bluffness. Nevertheless, it was very much shaken and confused by the creation of the Western Empire under Charlemagne. That made two kings of the world. If two why not more?

About the year 1000, under Brian, that portion of the Book of Rights which concerns Munster was rewritten, and we have now the new version side by side with the old one. The new poem on the rights of the king of Cashel asserts that Cashel is subject to no king in Ireland but its own. But what about the king of the world? On that point the old idea still holds. This is what the poem says:

> Cashel overheadeth every head
> Except Patrick and the King of the Stars,
> The high-king of the world and the Son of God
> To these alone is due its homage.

But a few years later when Brian was king, not only of Cashel but of all Ireland, his view about the high-king of the world, the Emperor—eastern or western—had undergone a change. He recognised the spiritual primacy of Armagh, and when he visited Armagh, which now holds his dust, he offered a tribute of twenty ounces of gold. The Book of Armagh was displayed to him, and in his presence his official historian wrote in Latin these words, which are still upon the page:

"I Mael Suthain write this in the presence of Brian, Emperor of the Irish."

This title, "emperor of the Irish," is not a mere high-sounding epithet. It means that, as Basil was then supreme temporal ruler in the East and Henry of Bavaria in the West, so was Brian in this island.

Another trait in Brian's policy was his avoidance of battle when, by delay or otherwise, he could hope to establish his authority. In 1001, when Brian's aim at supremacy was clear to the high king Mael Sechlainn, the latter prepared to resist with the effective co-operation of the king of Connacht, and to this end built a new causeway of stone across the Shannon at Athlone. Brian's first move the following year was to occupy Athlone and prevent co-operation; and it was at Athlone that he received the submission of both kings. Year after year he led his army into the North to obtain the submission of the northern states; and when he was opposed in force he retired without battle, until at length it became evident that he had the

power to enforce submission and the northern hostages were yielded to him in peace.

Some writers have been at pains to argue that the popular view of the battle of Clontarf as a national victory over foreigners is a delusion; and would have it that this battle was either a mere incident in the domestic wars of Ireland or was rather a struggle between the forces of Christianity and Heathendom. It is enough to say that the Norse sagas regard the battle as the Irish popular view regards it—a contest between Irishmen and Norsemen about the sovereignty of Ireland. The kingdom of Ireland was the prize which king Sigtrygg of Dublin offered to Earl Sigurd of the Orkneys. It was to win Ireland that the Norsemen came from distant Iceland and from Normandy; and the Norse poet who tells of the event says, "Brian fell but saved his kingdom." "This Brian," too, says the Norse account, "was the best of kings."

If the battle of Clontarf ended the prospect of a Norse conquest, it brought no advantage to the internal peace of Ireland. The effect of Brian's assumption of the monarchy is visible. The year after the battle, Flaithbertach Ua Néill, king of Ailech, came southward with his hosting, plainly with the aim of restoring the alternate succession, under which he would become next king of Ireland after Mael Sechnaill. Mael Sechnaill resumed the high-kingship and held it until his death in 1022. The king of Ailech seems then to have made no attempt to assert his claim to the high-kingship; and for half a century afterwards no high-king is recog-

nised. Towards the end of the century, the monarchy is restored, going now always to the strong hand—two O'Briens from Thomond, two O'Conors from Connacht, and two O'Lochlainns from Tyrone; an irregular hegemony, without even the semblance of an institution.

The Icelandic saga of Burnt Njal shows us in the most vivid possible way how great a shock Clontarf sent through the Norse world. The battle, it tells us, was accompanied or followed by apparitions and dreadful portents seen in the Hebrides, in the Orkneys, in the Faroe islands, and in distant Iceland. In truth a victory for Earl Sigurd might have been, as his defeat must have been, a decisive event in European history. The Norse of Dublin were comparatively not much affected. They maintained their alliance with Leinster. Three years after the battle, these confederates are again seen on the offensive, invading Bregia, and their joint forces sustain a heavy defeat from Mael Sechnaill.

Though a close intercourse was maintained with Norsemen in other countries, the colonies of Dublin, Wexford, Waterford and Limerick became a domestic factor in the life of Ireland. Intermarriage with the Irish was quite common. We find Norse names in Irish families and Irish names in Norse families, and a considerable vocabulary of Norse words became at home in the Irish language. A new element, the commercial life of towns, was introduced by these colonies.

X. MEDIEVAL IRISH INSTITUTIONS

THE Book of Rights divides Ireland into a little more than a hundred petty states (owing to certain peculiarities of treatment, the number cannot be stated definitely.) These are arranged in seven groups, with an over-king at the head of each group. The principal matter of the book is to define certain relations between the over-king of each group and the petty kings under him. All this is told in verse. The plan of the book is to allot two poems to each of the over-kingdoms or groups of states. One of the two poems relates the tributes payable by the petty states to the over-king at the head of the group. The other poem relates the customary gifts given by the over-king to the petty kings. Great importance was attached to this giving and receiving of gifts, and the significance of the gifts is clearly expressed in their Irish name, *tuarastal*. The meaning of this word, which is still in familiar use, is wages. The gifts then were not favours. The acceptance of them was an act of homage. The king who accepted *tuarastal* from another king acknowledged himself to be that other king's man, to be, so to speak, in his pay—if only in a figurative or ceremonial sense.

Not all the petty states were subject to tribute. When the dynasty of a petty state was a branch of

the over-king's dynasty, no tribute was due. In Munster, for example, there were various petty states whose rulers were of the Eoghanacht lineage. These paid no tribute to the king of Cashel, who was also of Eoghanacht lineage. The other states were tributary. This exemption from tribute and liability to tribute goes back to an ancient state of conquest, but of conquest during the Celtic period. The citizens of the tributary states were freemen, whereas the people of the older communities of pre-Celtic origin were, at least in theory, unfree. This does not mean that they were slaves. The status of the unfree communities, roundly speaking, was similar to that of the natives of British India at present; and the status of a tributary state would be comparable to that of a country possessing self-government but subject to what is called an imperial contribution. The non-tributary states might be compared to the existing autonomous dominions of the British Empire. There were distinct names for each class. Non-tributary states were called *saor-thuatha*, "free states"; tributary states were called *fortuatha*, which means "alien states"; unfree communities were called *daor-thuatha*, which we might translate "vassal-states"—and they were also called *aithech-thuatha*, "rent paying states." Each free or tributary state had a distinct territory, but the unfree communities were not bounded by the territorial bounds of the others. They might overlap the bounds of two or more States, and some of them were broken into separate groups distributed here and there over a very wide area.

The compilation of the Book of Rights is ascribed to two writers, Selbach and Oengus, acting under the authority of Cormac mac Cuilennáin, king of Munster. Cormac reigned from 901 to 908. As O'Donovan has shown, the Book received certain amplifications under a king of Munster who claimed to be, or aimed to make himself, king of Ireland; and O'Donovan properly argues that this king could only be Brian Bóramha. Moreover I think that there are fairly clear indications of the year 1000 or 1001 as the date of these amplifications.

The Book of Rights was edited by O'Donovan and published in 1847 by the Celtic Society. The Council and officers of this society, whose names follow the title page, form a list which shows a greater interest in Irish historical studies at that time than in our time among Irishmen of high standing in learning and politics. The names include those of Sir Aubrey de Vere, Sir Robert Kane, William Monsell, William Smith O'Brien, Daniel O'Connell, Dr. Renehan, president of Maynooth College, Thomas Hutton, Sir Colman O'Loghlen, Michael Joseph Barry, Dr. Crolly, Charles Gavan Duffy, Samuel Ferguson, Dr. Graves, James Hardiman, William Elliott Hudson, Dr. Matthew Kelly, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, William Torrens McCullagh, John Mitchel, Thomas O'Hagan, John Edward Pigot, Sir William Wilde, Dr. Madden, and Thomas Francis Meagher. The edition belongs to O'Donovan's early work. A new edition is very much to be desired, with a critical treatment of the text and more accurate notes, taking advantage of the great increase of

philological, historical and topographical knowledge accumulated during the seventy years that have passed since this first and only edition was brought out.

I think it likely that only the section relating to Munster was drawn up in Cashel; that this section was circulated as a model; and that each of the other sections was drawn up on this model by writers on behalf of the other principal kings. For example, in the Connacht section, the tributes are said to be brought "hither," a fairly definite indication that the writer belonged to the personal surrounding of the king of Connacht.

The over-kings in the Book of Rights are the kings of (1) Cashel, (2) Cruachain, (3) Ailech, (4) Oriel, (5) Ulaidh, (6) Tara, (7) Leinster. In the section for Oriel, the statement of tributes is wanting. Its absence is probably not accidental. The kings of Ailech from the fifth century onward kept steadily extending their power eastward and southward, encroaching on the domain of the kings of Oriel. Armagh, the ecclesiastical capital, was in Oriel, and one can clearly trace throughout a long period of time a definite policy, on the part of the Ailech dynasty, of bringing and keeping Armagh within their sphere of influence. The natural resistance of the kings of Oriel appears to have been broken down by their defeat in 827, in the battle of Leth Camm, at the hands of Niall Caille, king of Ailech and afterwards king of Ireland. According to an old tract, from this time forward, the kings of Oriel became tributary to Ailech. This would explain

the omission from the Book of Rights, drawn up about eighty years later, of a list of tributes payable to the over-kings of Oriel.

In the tenth century we find the kings of Ailech still inhabiting Ailech. In the eleventh century, the name of their domestic territory, Tír Eoghain, has been transferred from the district of Ailech to that which now bears the name, "Tyrone," which was formerly the central part of the kingdom of Oriel. I have not been able to determine how or at what time the old Tír Eoghain, now called Inis Eoghain, containing the fortress of Ailech, passed into the dominion of the kings of Tír Conaill. With regard to Oriel, there is one point to be carefully noted. In the early documents of the Anglo-Norman regime, we find the name Oriel used to comprise the present county of Louth, which is called the English Oriel, being occupied by feudal grantees. Only a very small fraction of the county belonged to the Irish kingdom of Oriel; but a few years before Strongbow's invasion, Donnchadh O'Cearbhaill, king of Oriel, extended his dominion southward to the Boyne. It was he who, in exercise of this extended dominion, granted the lands of Mellifont to the Cistercians. This recent occupation caused the feudal newcomers to extend the name Oriel to the whole region between Oriel and the Boyne. This nomenclature may well hold good for documents of the feudal regime—but we find it used to import error and confusion into quite a different class of documents. For example, the editor of the Annals of Ulster, in his index, says that Oirghialla comprises

the county of Louth, though the name is not used in that sense before the fifteenth century; and he omits to say that in the early annals Oriel comprises Tyrone and the larger part of County Derry.

This method of treatment is unfortunately typical of the manner in which the sources of Irish history have been presented in publication. It is not mere anachronism. The underlying principle is that what is true of one period is true of the whole range of time covered by Irish records. When we find sympathetic editors of these records obsessed by such a view, we are still more inclined, in the case of antipathetic writers, to content ourselves with the judgment recorded by Columbanus—to deem them worthy of indulgence rather than of ridicule.

The tenth and eleventh centuries produced a school of Irish historians whose chief work was to reduce the old miscellaneous matter of tradition to unity and sequence. It would have been well if they had been satisfied with so much, but they went farther. In dealing with the pre-Christian period, they tampered with tradition in two ways. Where they found definite elements of heathenism, they either cut these out or furbished them in a guise which they considered consonant with Christian belief; and this can be shown to have been done consciously and deliberately. They also took a free hand in devising a system of chronology for events that had no chronology. On this point, they did not all act together, and so, for such epochs as the Gaelic invasion, we have six or seven different dates varying from the fourth to the eighteenth century B.C. Not-

withstanding these defects in their work, the historians of this period acquired in later times a degree of authority that stood up as a barrier in front of the past. Their highly artificial treatment was vested with all the sanctity of veritable tradition. The main work that has now to be done by students of Irish antiquity is to get behind this barrier and bring into the light the abundant remains of older tradition that are extant.

I have said that, in the minds of the scattered Norse community, the battle of Clontarf broke the victorious prestige of their race. It happened at a critical moment, for in the year before it, in 1013, the Danish conquest of England had been completed, and all England had submitted to the rule of Sveinn, king of Denmark. Nearly a century later, king Magnus of Norway endeavoured to restore the empire of the Norsemen. He succeeded in bringing under his authority all the Scottish islands, Caithness, part of Argyle, and the Isle of Man. Once more, Ireland shaped the course of history. In 1102, Magnus, then in the Isle of Man, sent an embassy to Ireland threatening war, and no doubt demanding tribute. Muirchertach O'Briain, then king of Ireland, obtained a year's truce. About the same time, Muirchertach made peace for a year with Domhnall MacLochlainn, king of Tyrone, who opposed his claim to the high-kingship. Next year, 1103, Muirchertach marched against Domhnall, but was defeated in the neighbourhood of Banbridge. About the same time, and probably taking advantage of this internal conflict, Magnus made a

landing on the Ulster coast, but was cut off and fell in the fight. With his fall, the prospect of a Norse empire came to an end.

The weakening of the Norse power at Clontarf restored in some measure the freedom of the seas. During the Norse wars, the old missionary movement from Ireland to the Continent became a refugee movement. Afterwards we see abundant evidence of a freer intercourse. For example, the annals record frequent pilgrimages of Irish kings to Rome, beginning with the pilgrimage of Flaithbertach O'Neill in 1028. During the Norse wars, the condition of the Church in Ireland had not improved. We read strange things in newspapers, and no doubt Providence works in strange ways, but the fact remains that war in itself is the negation of moral and spiritual force. St. Bernard tells us something about the condition of part of Ireland, as described to him by St. Malachy and his companions who visited him at Clairvaux in 1139. The description refers to my native district, the diocese of Connor, the time 1124, when St. Malachy was sent there as bishop. "He discovered," says St. Bernard, "that it was not to men but to beasts he had been sent; in all the barbarism which he had yet encountered, he had never met such a people, so profligate in their morals, so uncouth in their ceremonies, so impious in faith, so barbarous in laws, so rebellious to discipline, so filthy in their life, Christians in name but Pagans in reality. They neither paid first fruits nor tithes, nor contracted marriage legitimately, nor made their confessions." There were few clergy and those few

but little employed. In the churches neither preaching nor chanting was heard. All this is the language of pious reprobation. In that age, adherence to local custom as against the general practice of the Church was often denounced as impious. And we are told that within eight years, before St. Malachy was transferred from Connor to Armagh, "their obduracy yielded, their barbarism was softened, and the exasperating family began to be more tractable, to receive correction by degrees, and to embrace discipline. Barbarous laws were abrogated, the Roman laws (*i.e.* of the Church) were introduced, the customs of the Church were everywhere admitted and contrary customs abolished. Churches were rebuilt and supplied with priests. The rites of the sacraments were duly administered, confession was practised, the people attended the church, and concubinage was suppressed by the solemnisation of marriage. In a word, so completely were all things changed for the better that you can apply to that people now what the Lord said by his prophet—'They who were not my people are now my people.'"

The writer of these words, Bernard of Clairvaux, was the most outstanding figure in Christendom at that time. Popes and emperors, kings and peoples, waited upon his word. His abbey of Clairvaux became in his time alone the parent of a hundred and sixty Cistercian foundations in many lands, among the rest in Ireland. Bernard gloried in the acquaintance and friendship of the Irishman Malachy. "To me also in this life," he writes, "it was given to see this man. In his look and word I was re-

freshed, and I rejoiced as in all manner of riches." After some years, Malachy once more visited Bernard at Clairvaux and died there peacefully in the presence of Bernard on All Souls' Day, 1148. St. Bernard wrote afterwards a life of his Irish friend, partly from what he learned from him and his companions and partly from an account sent to him from Ireland by the abbot Comgan. This life is extant, as also are two discourses by St. Bernard, one delivered at St. Malachy's funeral, the other at a later anniversary celebration. There are also extant two letters written by St. Bernard to St. Malachy regarding the foundation of Mellifont, in which both had part, and a letter from St. Bernard to the Cistercians of Mellifont giving them an account of St. Malachy's death. I mention these details to exemplify the close and frequent intercourse between Ireland and the Continent in the period preceding the Norman invasion of Ireland. Many other evidences could be cited to the same effect.

From this intercourse, there arose a strong desire to bring about a closer conformity between the Church in Ireland and on the Continent and to reform the abuses in morality and discipline that resulted from a long period of warfare and partial isolation. This movement for reform, it should be noted, came mainly from within, and the leading part in it was taken by Irishmen. One reforming synod succeeded another. The details may be found in works on Irish ecclesiastical history. Besides St. Malachy, may be noted the names of Cellach or Celsus, who came before him, and Gilla Maic Liac or

Gelasius who came after him in the primacy; of Gillebert, bishop of Limerick, whose work, "De Statu Ecclesiae," was written in the cause of ecclesiastical reform; of Flaithbertach O'Brolcháin, abbot of Derry; and Lorcán, St. Laurence, archbishop of Dublin.

Following the introduction of the Cistercian Order by St. Malachy, the Synod of Bri Maic Thaidg in 1158 undertook to reorganise the old Columban monasteries, uniting them in a single order, over which O'Brolcháin, abbot of Derry, was appointed abbot-general. This abbot was a great builder. In rebuilding his monastery in Derry, he removed eighty houses—from this and from various items regarding Armagh, Kildare, etc., in the annals, we gather that these monastic and scholastic towns had a considerable population. The new buildings were of stone, for the abbot had an immense lime-kiln built, eighty feet square, to provide lime for their construction.

In the year 1164, Sumarlidi, king of Argyle and the Hebrides, and the community of Iona sent an embassy to Derry to offer the abbacy of Iona to O'Brolcháin, but the king of Ireland, O'Lochlainn, and his nobles, would not consent to his leaving Derry. The Norman invasion made an end of the attempt to organise the Columban monasteries.

The Synod of Clane in 1162 ordered that in future only pupils, or as we should now say, graduates of Armagh, were to obtain the position of *fer léiginn* or chief professor in a school attached to any church in Ireland. This decree then was equivalent to a

recognition of the school of Armagh as a national university for all Ireland. I recommend the fact to the notice of those writers who cherish the delusion that Irishmen in that age had no conception of nationality. In 1169, the year of the Norman invasion, the king of Ireland, Ruaidhrí O'Conchubhair, who lived in Connacht, established and endowed in Armagh a new professorship for the benefit of students from Ireland and Scotland.

The position of *fer léiginn* is first noticed in the annals in the tenth century. This points to a new development in the schools of Ireland at that time. Four men holding this position are named in that century by the Annals of Ulster, and three of the four are in the school of Armagh. The fourth is in Slane. In the eleventh century, Kells and Monasterboice have their *fer léiginn*. In Monasterboice that position was held by the poet-historian Flann, who belonged to the ruling family in that region, the Cianachta. In the twelfth century, there are notices of the *fer léiginn* in Kildare, Derry, Clonmacnois, Killaloe, Emly and Iona. The Norman Invasion brought ruin to all these schools. The last notice of the school or rather university of Armagh is in 1188. Three years before this, Philip of Worcester, king Henry's Justiciary, at the head of a great army, occupied Armagh for a week and plundered the clergy; and Giraldus, who denounces this exploit, says with a jibe, "he returned to Dublin without loss."

We have seen how St. Bernard reports the strong terms used by the Irish reformers themselves in

condemnation of the abuses they laboured to remove. It was this very language of pious reprobation that Henry II seized upon as furnishing the pretext for the commission he sought and obtained from his friend Pope Adrian to reform the Irish Church and people. I take it that the *Laudabiliter* is genuine. Without discussing all the arguments against its authenticity, but admitting that the heads of those arguments are made good, in my opinion neither any one of them nor all of them together suffice at all to discredit the document. In it, the Pope replies to *a proposal made by Henry* and states that proposal in these terms: "Laudably and profitably hath your magnificence conceived the design . . . you are intent on enlarging the borders of the Church, teaching the truth of the Christian faith to the ignorant and rude, exterminating the roots of vice from the field of the Lord, and, for the more convenient execution of this purpose, requiring the counsel and favour of the Apostolic See. . . . You then, most dear son in Christ, have signified to us your desire, in order to reduce the people to obedience unto laws, and to extirpate the plants of vice . ." and so forth. The terms in which these good purposes are stated are merely an echo in brief of such words as those in which St. Bernard describes the reforms already effected by St. Malachy.

Now let us compare what may be called the "war aims" of Henry, thus stated by him to Pope Adrian and approved by the Pope, with the actual measures adopted. The Synod of Cashel was convened at Henry's instance by Gilla Críst, bishop of Lismore

and papal legate, and attended by most of the Irish prelates. Henry was represented by several high ecclesiastics whom he brought to Ireland. The decrees of the Synod *were confirmed by Henry*. They are therefore of the highest importance as determining what had to be done to "enlarge the bounds of the Church, to teach the truth of Christian faith to the ignorant and rude, and to extirpate the roots of vice from the field of the Lord." The provisions of the Synod number eight as related by Giraldus Cambrensis:

The first decree forbids marriage within the degrees of kindred fixed by the law of the Church. The second requires children to receive catechetical instruction outside of churches and to be baptised at fonts duly provided in the churches. The third commands all to pay tithes to their own parish churches. The fourth exempts Church property from temporal exactions. The fifth exempts the clergy from paying a share in the compensation for homicide, though of kindred to the guilty person. The sixth regulates the making of wills. The seventh prescribes the religious rites to be performed for those who die in peace with God. The eighth orders that the Church ritual in Ireland shall be the same as in England.

That is all. Giraldus adds: "Indeed both the realm and Church of Ireland are indebted to this mighty king for whatever they enjoy of the blessings of peace and the growth of religion; as before his coming to Ireland all sorts of wickedness had prevailed among this people for a long series of years,

which now, by his authority and care of administration, are abolished." No wonder indeed that our historian Keating names Giraldus the *tarbh tána*, the leading bull of the herd, of the long-stretched herd of historians, journalists, and zealous reformers of "all sorts of wickedness." Giraldus, however, was not entirely a partisan of false pretences. Years afterwards, when Henry was dead, he addresses his successor John, reminding him of his father's pledge to Pope Adrian, then also dead—the first pledge made by an English ruler in regard of Ireland, whereby, he says, Henry "secured the sanction of the highest earthly authority to an enterprise of such magnitude, involving the shedding of Christian blood." This pledge, he says, has not been kept. On the contrary, "the poor clergy in the island are reduced to beggary; the cathedral churches, which were richly endowed with broad lands by the piety of the faithful in the olden times," and which, we may add, supported on these endowments the schools already mentioned, "now echo with lamentations for the loss of their possessions, of which they have been robbed by these men and others who came over with them or after them; so that to uphold the Church is turned into spoiling and robbing it." Even the revenue, the Peter's Pence, promised by Henry to the Pope was not paid, and Giraldus pleads that it should be paid in future, "in order that some acknowledgment and propitiation may be made to God for this bloody conquest *and the profits of it*."

And now, before considering further the character and effects of the Feudal conquests in Ireland,

let us take a general view of the domestic polity of Ireland.

In recent times, and only, I think, in recent times we find the whole of this domestic polity, or nearly the whole of it, summed up in one convenient phrase —the Clan System. This phrase is used by the ultra-patriotic just as freely and confidently as by those on the opposite edge—whatever we are to call them—those people who perform for Irish history the not unfruitful function of devil's advocate. The word system imparts a notion of something arranged in a definite and perceptible order, and those who speak or write about the Clan System indicate thereby that they have some perception of this detailed and co-ordinated arrangement. But I do not know where any one of them has successfully undertaken to reduce his mental view of the system to plain words. I think, however, most of us have gathered in a vague way the underlying notions. They amount to this :

The Irish population was divided into a large number of groups, each of which was a " clan." At the head of each clan was a chief. The clan and the chief considered themselves to be of one blood, a great family. Each clan occupied a definite stretch of country and was in fact the population of its territory. The clan was a miniature nation. That, I think, is a fair summary of the prevailing notions as to the basis of what is called the clan system.

Some writers prefer to say " tribal system." I have been reproached with avoiding the word " tribe." I have avoided it, and for two reasons ;

first, because some have used it in so loose a sense as to make it meaningless; and second, because others have used it with the deliberate intent to create the impression that the structure of society in Ireland down to the twelfth century, and in parts of Ireland down to the seventeenth century, finds its modern parallel among the Australian or Central African aborigines. Already, in reference to the law of succession, I have mentioned the *deirbfine*, the Irish legal family of four generations, a man, his sons, grandsons, and great grandsons. O'Donovan calls this family a tribe. I told how, in the battle of Caiméirghe in 1241, Brian O'Néill secured the kingship of Tyrone for himself and his line by cutting off his rival MagLochlainn and ten men of MagLochlainn's *deirbfine*. Here the word *deirbfine* has a very special and technical importance; but the student who has to rely on the official editorial translation misses the whole significance of the Irish term. The translator of the Annals of Ulster renders the passage thus: "The battle of Caiméirghe was given by Brian O'Neill and Mael-Sechlainn O'Domnaill, king of Cenel Conaill, to Domnall MagLochlainn, to the king of Tir-Eogain, so that Domnall MagLochlainn was killed therein and ten of his own tribe around him; and all the chiefs of Cenel-Eogain and many other good persons likewise. And the kingship was taken by Brian O'Neill after him."

It is certain that in the beginnings of Irish history we find the tradition of the tribal group, just as we find it in the history of the Hebrews, the Greeks, the Romans, the Germans, and their offshoots the Anglo-

Saxons. It is also certain that Ireland, not having been overrun and shaken up by any of the great migrations after the migration of the Celts, and not having been steam-rolled by the levelling weight of Roman imperialism, preserved a great deal of the old tradition. Our old books are full of it. My third lecture dealt very much with the evidences of ancient tribal communities which survived in some shape into historical time. It is, however, perfectly clear to any student of the materials that already in early Christian Ireland the old tribal distinctions are waning and disappearing under various influences. All Irish people, Ebudeans, Ivernians, Picts, Fir Bolg, Galians, are known to each other by the common name of Gaedhil, itself once the name of the dominant Celtic element; to others they are all known as Scotti. So complete is the fusion that, when by ancient custom this or that portion of the community remains liable to pay tributes or taxes in virtue of their being the successor of some old conquered tribe, our old historians or archivists are careful again and again to say that the people themselves are free and that these imposts are attached only to the lands on which they dwell.

I think that the popular notion of a Gaelic clan is derived from Scottish writers like Thomas Campbell and Sir Walter Scott. "False wizard, avaunt! I have marshalled my clan. Their swords are a thousand, their bosoms are one." Here we have the picture of the men of Lochiel's country, Camerons to a man, headed by their Cameron chief. I do not know how far such pen-pictures are true of Scotland

and the time to which they relate. I do know that you will find nothing of the kind in historical Ireland. Ask for a similar instance of an Irish clan. I suppose the O'Neills of Tyrone will do. The O'Neills were never more than a small fraction of the people of Tyrone or of any part of Tyrone. Take the period preceding the confiscation of Tyrone. Shane O'Neill, in order to convince certain persons of the futility of trying to poison him, said that if the hundred best men of the name of O'Neill were cut off, there would still be O'Neills to succeed him. That seems to justify Mr. Bigger when he says that there are as many O'Neills in Tyrone to-day as there were then. The fullest lists of the followers of Irish chiefs are to be found in the Elizabethan fiants; and these documents effectually dispel the illusion of an O'Neill at the head of a thousand O'Neills or an O'Brien leading a host of O'Briens. It is quite true, as I have shown in a previous lecture, that by the process of creating mean lords and in other ways, the ruling families provided for their own kinsfolk at the expense of their other subjects, and thus acquired a disproportionate increase. The extension of great families in this manner is the one fact that comes nearest to substantiating the illusion of a clan system.

From the popular I pass on to the learned view. Ireland in the twelfth century, says Mr. Orpen, was still in the tribal state. This is written to justify the Norman invasion. The Normans were not in the tribal state. Mr. Orpen relies strongly on Giraldus as a witness in other matters. Giraldus omitted

nothing that occurred to him to say that could justify the invasion, in which his friends and kinsfolk took a prominent part. From first to last it did not occur to Giraldus to say that the Irish were in a tribal state. He knew the facts. If there were outstanding clans in Ireland, *i.e.*, noble kindreds, so were there among the invaders. Giraldus himself belonged to the same clan as Milo de Cogan, Gerald FitzGerald, Raymond le Gros, and others of those bold adventurers. He is not ashamed of it, and being half a Welshman, he is under no delusions about the social structure of the Irish nation.

When we read on to learn what is Mr. Orpen's idea of an Irish tribe, we are gradually enlightened. We find that the tribe of king Diarmaid is the Ui Ceinnsealaigh. Here is the main authentic basis of the illusion. It is a peculiarity of Irish nomenclature that a territory is called by the name of its ruling family. Ui Ceinnsealaigh thus has two meanings. It means the descendants of Ceinnsealach and it also means the territory over which the chiefs of that lineage ruled as kings, namely the diocese of Ferns. But the Ui Ceinnsealaigh were never at any time more than a tiny fraction of the population of that territory. 'Enna Ceinsealach, their ancestor, lived in the fifth century; and however well his posterity may have looked after themselves, they certainly did not displace from the region that got their name any large proportion of its inhabitants descended from other ancestors. The territory called Clann Aodha Buidhe covered a large part of the present counties of Down and Antrim. The tribe named

Clann Aodha Buidhe were the descendants of Aodh Buidhe O'Neill, who died in the year 1280. They never at any time amounted to a territorial population. There were clans of Norman origin in Ireland, too, and territories named from them. There were the De Burghs of Clann Ricaird in Connacht, and their country named from them; the De Burghs of Clann William in Munster, and their country still so named; FitzGeralds of Clann Mhuiris in Munster and in Connacht, and the districts still keep their name; there are Power's country, and Roche's country, and Joyce's country, and Condon's, and Barrymore, and Clann Ghiobúin, the Fitzgibbons—family and country bearing the same name after the Irish manner. Every one of these great families was precisely as much and as little a tribe as any Irish tribe that Mr. Orpen has in contemplation; as much and as little a tribe as the Plantagenets or the Bourbons or the Hapsburgs or the Hohenzollerns.

Undoubtedly in these great families there was a good deal of what we call clannishness—of devotion to their particular interest to the detriment of the public or the national interest. On the other hand, it is quite a mistake to suppose that the hostility of clan to clan, as is often said, was the principal element of harm to peace. The Irish chronicles show clearly that domestic wars arose far more frequently from disputes and rivalries between members of a ruling family. It was the same among the Welsh, and a recent Welsh historian has justly traced this evil to the law of succession which was similar in the two countries—the choice of suc-

cessor to king or lord being open between a number of claimants. A doubtful succession was the fruitful source of disorder in other countries also. Readers of history will remember its effects in the Roman empire, the wars of the Scottish succession before Bannockburn, the Wars of the Roses in England, the war of the Spanish succession. The feudal law of primogeniture tended to minimise this danger.

Here we find another instance of the ignoring of time and change in books on Irish history. I think I am right in saying that most readers gather from these books the impression that the Irish institution of Tanistry dates from time immemorial. There is no mention of a tanist in the Annals until the thirteenth century, after feudal institutions had been established in many parts of Ireland; and we can trace the gradual spread of the custom in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It seems right then to infer that those who lived under Irish law were impressed by the greater stability afforded by Feudal law in this matter of succession, perhaps also by the aggravation of their own plight owing to the opportunities that a disputed succession gave for the interference of the enemy in their midst; and that they sought to remove this evil and danger by determining the succession beforehand, choosing in the ruler's lifetime the man who was to succeed him, the tanist.

Another notion which has accompanied the modern illusion of the "clan system," is that of the communal holding of land by the tribe or clan. This

view, like that of the "clan system," has had its enthusiastic eulogists and its self-complacent censors. On one side we are asked to admire our forefathers for anticipating Sir Horace Plunkett. On the other side we are told that progress and even temporary well-doing in agriculture were rendered impossible by a system under which all the land belonged to everybody at once and to nobody for long. Once more we are faced with that canon of Irish history, "Credo quia impossibile." We are seriously asked to believe that the lands of a tribe, meaning the population under a territorial chief or even under a king, was held in common by all; and more than that, was periodically thrown into hotch-potch, taken from everybody and redistributed among all. Now we can imagine what an event that would be, taking place all over a district as large as the diocese of Ferns; or even as large as the barony of Forth; what a feature it would have been in the simple life of a large countryside. Strange, is it not? that no account of any such resettlement of a district appears in any Irish writing, even in the form of an incidental allusion. The fact is that no such communal system existed on any scale approaching to the territorial. I have described the constitution of the *deirbfine*, the legal unit of succession. There were larger family groups, based on the kinship of five, six and seven generations. It was among such groups that property was held in common, when it was property of a kind that did not lend itself to subdivision in accurate proportions—just as succession to the kingship, being indivisible, was common to a family

group until its determination became necessary. But as new generations came forward, existing family groups were of necessity dissolved and reconstituted. When this happened, a redistribution of the family property was necessitated. Moreover, there were certain kinds of land—mountain, bog, forest, and marsh, which were not divided by fences or mearings into individual or family holdings—and these were held in common both in ancient and in modern times. And that, I think, is the foundation of prevalent notions about communal land tenure in ancient Ireland.

Those who desire a studied account of ancient land tenures in Ireland—in preference to their own or other people's imaginings—should read the little book on Irish Land Tenures by Dr. Sigerson.

Connected again with the notion of communal ownership is the denial of proprietary rights of kings and lords. It must not be a question whether the *altum dominium*, the extreme form of proprietorship in land, was a good thing or a bad thing. We want to know the facts first, before we pass a valuation on them. Mr. Orpen is obsessed with the notion that the Irish order and the Feudal order were as the poles apart. Accordingly he says that the Irish political structure nowise depended on grants of land. I do not know and I do not inquire what may be the peculiar virtue of a polity depending upon grants of land; but I do know that the structure of Irish political society in the twelfth century was mainly based on that foundation. Documentary proofs, referring to various dates from

the travels of St. Patrick down to the eve of the Norman invasion, show that every lord in his degree, from the local chief of a small territory up to the king of Ireland held and exercised the power of granting ownership in land over the heads of all occupiers. If the king of Tyrone was also king of Ireland his power of making grants was not confined to his domestic territory of Tyrone. So the Annals tell us that Muirchertach O'Lochlainn, king of Tyrone and monarch of Ireland, granted a townland at Drogheda to the Cistercians of Mellifont, and a charter of the same king is extant granting lands at Newry to another religious house. Diarmait MacMurchadha was king of Leinster, his domestic realm, or as Mr. Orpen would say his tribal territory, being Ui Ceinnsealaigh. He was also recognised over-king of the Norse kingdom of Dublin, which included a stretch of country northward from Dublin and outside of the kingdom of Leinster. In virtue of this extended kingship, Diarmait granted lands at Baldoyle to a religious community, and the charter of his grant is still extant. In truth, the granting and regranting of lordship over lands is the keynote of the Irish dynastic polity from the fifth to the sixteenth century.

What then of the objections that were raised to the introduction of feudal law under Henry VIII. and afterwards? Was it not contended on the Irish side that the chief or king had no more than a life-tenure of the territory he ruled, and that in accepting feudal tenure he was disposing of what did not belong to him? That is so. In accepting feudal

tenure, he disposed of the succession, which he had no legal power to determine: the determination of which, within limits fixed by law, belonged to his people. It was theirs, not by virtue of communal ownership of the land, but by virtue of the right of election to the principality. Of this right they were deprived by the introduction of feudal law. The law of tanistry was a reasonable provision which preserved the right of election and yet determined the succession in advance.

XI. THE NORMAN CONQUEST

THERE was one advantage incidental to the feudal law of primogeniture, which did not belong to the Irish law of succession before or after the institution of tanistry. In feudal law, the lawful successor might be a child, an invalid, a demented person, and in some countries a woman. In feudal law, as in Irish law, and in ancient law generally, the ruler was also chief judge and chief military commander for his people and territory. Each of Henry's feudal grantees in Ireland held and exercised these functions. The kings of England themselves, from William the Conqueror to Henry II. and the Saxon and Danish kings before them, were judges and generals as well as chiefs of State. The Irish law contemplated a ruler who was fitted in mind and body to exercise these functions. The law of primogeniture often failed to secure such fitness. At first sight, the Irish law seems to have the advantage, but on closer consideration the case will appear otherwise.

If the ruler of the state combines in his own person the offices of judge and military commander and performs these offices in person, as well as the presidency of the public assembly, it follows that there must be as many states and rulers as there are presidents of assembly, judges of law, military com-

manders. And this is what we actually find in ancient Ireland. Most of the modern baronies, so-called, take the place of ancient kingdoms. The ruler being in the people's mind fit to judge in litigation and to lead in war and to preside over the assembly, and being unfit to rule as king when he could not perform these functions, there was no place in so simple a polity for ministers of State, and there was no regular delegation of these important duties. I think it will be admitted that the development of ministerial offices is one of the greatest phases in political progress.

On the other hand, the feudal law of primogeniture, under which the ruler at times might be a child, an idiot, or a weakling, rendered ministers of State a necessity. When Norman feudalism came to Ireland, it was just emerging from a condition similar to what it found in Ireland, and so the domestic polity of Ireland called for no remark from Giraldus, who was ready to find fault with anything, even with the fact that the Irish reared their children in a natural way, and succeeded admirably with it, instead of shaping their limbs and bodies with swathings and bandages. In southern Italy, the Normans found the civil service of the Byzantine emperors in operation; adopted it, and from them it spread to Normandy and England. This transformation was just taking place at the time of their invasion of Ireland, and was providing them with an apparatus of statecraft which the Irish did not possess.

The Feudal system, thus augmented, tended

towards centralisation. The Irish system had an opposite tendency. I notice that Mr. Orpen, in his comparison of the two systems, shows himself a whole-hearted worshipper of centralisation. His book, however, was written before the rulers and ministers of great states had begun to discover and formulate the objects of a righteous war. To my mind, European civilisation has suffered very much from undue centralisation—from the domination of courts and capitals over large regions and the consequent disrepute of what is called provincial life. We see the effect in countries like England and France, each of which consists of two parts—the capital and the provinces—the capital draining the provinces of all that is best in them, so that they are held and hold themselves in low esteem. I have often hoped that the Ireland of the future will not be unduly centralised, and that full scope will be given to the highest possible development of social life and art and education in every part of the country.

The Normans so-called, when they came to Ireland, had ceased to be Northmen. The contemporary Anglo-Saxon, Welsh and Irish chronicles call them by the same name, Franks. Franks they were in language, customs and institutions. If they sometimes called themselves Angli, this meant no more than that they were subjects of the *rex Anglorum*, the king of the English, and not of the king of the French. Their ordinary language was French. When Giraldus Cambrensis expresses the wish that his works should be translated into the vulgar

tongue, he makes it clear that he means French. In another part of his writings, he shows himself an enthusiastic adherent of the Welsh language, and voices a prophecy that his countrymen of Wales will speak Welsh till the day of Judgment. The rank and file of the invaders were Welshmen and Flemings. There was a large Flemish colony settled under the Normans in Pembrokeshire, and when the first invaders reached Ireland in 1169, an Irish chronicler recorded the arrival of the fleet of the Flemings. A Flemish colony was established after that in South Leinster, and their dialect continued in use there until well on in the nineteenth century. Many of the so-called Norman settlers in other parts of Ireland were Flemish and Welsh. Norman French continued to be used in Ireland for many generations. It was the language in which the colonists petitioned the lord Edward, as they called the king of England, for aid against Edward Bruce in 1315. I notice in Father Dinneen's Irish dictionary many of the words marked with the letter A, signifying of English origin, which I am sure came directly from the French of these invaders. Mr. Orpen's history is largely a laboured attempt to prove that the backward state of Ireland was the cause and justification of the invasion. This search after causes and justifications does not conduce to sound historical writing. One wonders how the method would be applied to the history of the Norman invasion and conquest of Sicily and southern Italy, possessing at the time the most highly developed political civilisation west of Constantinople. Among the French,

the Normans shared with the Gascons a reputation for extreme craftiness. They were also great fortress-builders. Giraldus recognises that in the open field the Irish were their superiors in fighting. They especially feared the Irish use of the battle-axe, learned from the old Norsemen. He recommends them to keep to the plan of conquest by what he calls incastellation—the building of strong castles at frequent strategic points. Against this method, well organised permanent forces could alone be effective, and the Irish in that age had no such military organisation. If the testimony of Giraldus is not biassed on the point, the only effective field forces which the invaders commanded consisted of Welshmen. Withal, it is to be said that the chiefs of the invasion were in general men of great valour, enterprise, and coolness. They brought with them a tradition of conquest and adventure.

Mr. Orpen says again and again that the Irish were turbulent. The Normans, he would have us believe, were all for law and order. It is again strange that this contrast did not occur at all to Giraldus, their comrade and kinsman and partisan. No one need wonder if a band of hardy adventurers should hold solidly together in their common interest for at least a generation. Yet the first generation of feudalism in Ireland witnessed a series of wars among the invaders themselves, quite as much warfare, in fact, as you will find on an average in an equal space of time among an equal number of chiefs of the turbulent Irish. But it was not in Ireland only that the Normans were turbulent.

Henry himself spent much of his great power in quelling the rebellions of his own sons and their partisans. If Giraldus Cambrensis says nothing about the particular turbulency and anarchy of Ireland in the twelfth century, it was probably because he and his readers did not know where in western Europe to look for anything else. Let me quote here from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle a picture of England under the Normans in the generation preceding the invasion of Ireland:

"A.D. 1137. When King Stephen came to England . . . . when the traitors [*i.e.* the nobles of England] perceived that he was a mild man, and a soft, and a good, and that he did not enforce justice, they did all wonder. They had done homage to him, and sworn oaths, but they no faith kept; all became forsworn and broke their allegiance; for every rich man built his castles and defended them against him, and they filled the land full of castles. They greatly oppressed the wretched people by making them work at these castles, and when the castles were finished they filled them with devils and evil men. Then they took those whom they suspected to have any goods, by night and by day, seizing both men and women, and they put them in prison for their gold and silver and tortured them with pains unspeakable; for never were any martyrs tortured as these were. They hung some up by their feet and smoked them with foul smoke; some by their thumbs or by the head, and they hung burning things on their feet. They put a knotted string about their heads and twisted it till it went into the brain. They put them into dungeons wherein were adders and snakes and toads, and thus wore them out. Some they put into a crucet-house, that is, into a chest that was short and narrow and not deep, and they put sharp stones in it and crushed the man therein so that they broke all his limbs. There were hateful and grim things called Sachenteges in

many of the castles, which two or three men had enough to do to carry. The Sachentege was made thus: it was fastened to a beam, having a sharp iron to go around a man's throat and neck, so that he might nowise sit nor lie nor sleep but that he must bear all the iron. Many thousands they exhausted with hunger. I cannot and I may not tell of all the wounds and all the tortures that they inflicted upon the wretched men of this land. And this state of things lasted the nineteen years that Stephen was king [1135–1154] and ever grew worse and worse. They were continually levying an exaction from the towns, which they called Tenserie, and when the miserable inhabitants had no more to give, then plundered they and burnt all the towns, so that well mightest thou walk a whole day's journey, or ever shouldest thou find a man seated in a town or its lands tilled. Then was corn dear, and flesh and cheese and butter, for there was none in the land. Wretched men starved with hunger. Some lived on alms who had been erewhile rich. Some fled the country. Never was there more misery, and never acted heathen worse than these. At length they spared neither church nor churchyard, but they took all that was valuable therein and then burned the church and all together. Neither did they spare the lands of bishops, of abbots, or of priests, but they robbed the monks and the clergy; and every man plundered his neighbour as much as he could. If two or three men came riding to a town, all the township fled before them and thought that they were robbers. The bishops and clergy were ever cursing them, but this to them was nothing, for they were all accurst and forsworn and reprobate. The earth bare no corn, you might as well have tilled the sea; for the land was all ruined by such deeds, and it was said openly that Christ and his saints slept. These things, and more than we can say, did we suffer during nineteen years because of our sins."

It was in the very year that followed these nineteen years that Henry, in his council of barons at

Winchester, first announced his intention of invading Ireland. The barons who formed the council were the castle-builders of the foregoing account written by their contemporary. From them and their sons were drawn the men who, we are to believe, came to establish law and order in the place of anarchy in Ireland; who were "to enter that island and execute whatsoever may tend to the honour of God and the welfare of the land"; who were "to restrain the downward course of vice, to correct evil customs, to implant virtue and extend the Christian religion"—these being the pious and laudable designs which Henry Plantagenet, who could not rule his own household or his own person, proposed at that time to his friend Pope Adrian.

I have already adverted to Mr. Orpen's doctrine that the Irishman had no nation but his tribe. In all these things, a comparison and a contrast is studiously suggested. To what nation did the leaders of the invasion belong? Mr. Orpen calls them Normans, but they themselves knew nothing of Norman nationality. They knew that their lord was duke of Normandy and as such a vassal of France. Among themselves they knew no distinction of Norman, Angevin, Poitevin, or Aquitanian. The most English of them came of three generations of residence in England as a foreign element—as Franks. These were only a few. The majority had lived in Wales or the Welsh marches. At a very early stage in the invasion, one leader, Maurice de Prendergast, went right over to the Irish. Another, De Courci, set himself up as an independent prince

in that region of intractable folk, eastern Ulster. The chief feature of Henry's Irish policy, continued by his son John, was not the subjugation of the Irish but the keeping of the Feudal lords of Ireland from becoming independent. Mr. Orpen does not like this policy. He calls it interference with the colony, and draws the moral of all his history by severely remarking that the same objectionable interference with the colony has been continued down to an indefinitely modern time. The lesson is meant to be taken to heart by somebody. The fact remains, that the colonists had no nationality until in the course of time they became Irelandmen, and ultimately more Irish than the Irish.

There is another feature of the invasion policy to which Mr. Orpen does no justice. Pope Adrian's successor had not the same personal interest in the invasion that Pope Adrian had. A papal legate was sent to Ireland. On his way through England, he was laid hold of and compelled to swear to do nothing in Ireland contrary to the king's interest. Evidently there was something to be apprehended. From England he went to the Isle of Man, where the Norse king was father-in-law and ally of de Courci, Prince of Ulster. As a policeman would say, in consequence of information received, the legate on his landing on the Irish coast was arrested by de Courci's men and carried captive to Downpatrick. De Courci, though a valiant knight, had done some things in Downpatrick, which a legate under arrest might be induced to regard more leniently than a legate at large. Downpatrick was a monastic and

ecclesiastical centre. De Courci had made it into a fortress. He had made the bishop of Down a prisoner and put some of the inferior clergy to death. Apparently he had taken complete possession of all the Church property. The captive bishop appears as witness to de Courci's grants of Irish Church possessions to foreign religious. The legate seems to have reached Dublin in a chastened temper. In Dublin, he granted formal authority to the invaders to make forcibly entry into Church property anywhere in Ireland. The plea is that the Irish stored their food in ecclesiastical places, and Mr. Orpen says it was a military necessity, and therefore justifiable, to get at these stores of food. All this was written before the conscience of so many had been awakened to the evils of militarism. However, the food pretext does not fit the fact. The fact was that before the legate came, as well as afterwards, it was the settled military policy of the invasion to occupy Irish churches and monasteries and turn them into fortresses. These places had something quite as useful as food, they had strong stone buildings, which could be held as they stood or pulled to pieces and used for the rapid erection of fortresses, of which process the following instance from the annals may be cited as an example:

A.D. 1214. The castle of Coleraine is built by Thomas son of Uhtred and by the Foreigners of East Ulster, and for that purpose were pulled to pieces the cemeteries and pavements and buildings of the whole town, save the church alone. (Coleraine until this time was a Columban monastery.)

From this we may see the full force of the extraordinary general permit extorted from the Pope's legate. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, already quoted, shows how earlier experience in Britain had prepared the fate of the Irish monasteries and schools.

A long list could be drawn up of the churches and monasteries occupied by the invaders, some permanently, others until evacuation was compelled.

This method of warfare reached parts of Ireland far remote from effective occupation by the invaders, and one of its results was the complete reversal of all the efforts towards reconstruction and progress which, as I have shown in the foregoing lecture, the Irish themselves had undertaken in the grounds of religion and education. The unconquered parts of Ireland were thrown back into the condition of the Norse war period. In the conquered parts, the Irish were excluded from education and ecclesiastical preferment. There was much building and much writing of official documents, but no progress in learning or the arts, not one school of note, and in an age when universities were springing up all over Christendom, there arose in Ireland only one University, which was stillborn.

On the other hand, the feudal invasion reached Ireland on a wave of developing town life, and its regime was able to monopolise this development in Ireland.

That the particular pledges, on the faith of which Henry obtained from Adrian the grant of the feudal lordship of Ireland, were not at all fulfilled by Henry, we know from general evidence and from the par-

ticular testimony of Giraldus, who implores John to fulfil them for the sake of his father's soul. John had other things to think about, and these pledges were not fulfilled by John or by any of his successors. A memorial on this subject was addressed, at the time of Edward Bruce's invasion, to the contemporary Pope by Domhnall O'Neill, king of Tyrone, and the document still exists, charging the Plantagenet rule in Ireland with general injury to religion and civilisation.

Among the barbarities of Ireland in the twelfth century, we are told by Mr. Orpen that the Irish had no legislature and no proper judicature. One wonders what sort of legislature Mr. Orpen imagines to have existed in England at that time, and whether he is aware that the English judicature was then only beginning to exist.

There is one feature of the Feudal settlement—if we may so call it—which is hard to place in its proper category—that is, to say whether it comes from systematic bad faith or merely from incapacity to act according to ordered notions of law. The Irish kings in general outside of Ulster made formal submission to Henry as their liege lord, and were received, as Giraldus says, into the protection of the most merciful king. This submission and reception constituted a solemn contract—the submitting kings became Henry's vassals and he became bound to defend and maintain them in their rights. In not a single instance was this contract observed for a moment longer than the opportunity to violate it was delayed. The rights and possessions of the

Irish vassal kings were straightway granted afresh to one or another of the new adventurers—and the new grants were not preceded or accompanied by the pretence of any escheatment or invalidation of the existing contract—so little importance was attached by Henry and John and their filibustering captains even to the outward appearances of law and order.

Let me give here an illustration of Mr. Orpen's historical temper. He admits his difficulty in ascertaining the name of the king of the Ulaidh at the time of de Courci's seizure of Downpatrick. What does it matter? he suggests. The surname, at all events, was MacDunlevy, and—these are his actual words—"the kings of this family were always killing one another." It seems a strange manner of existence, but then, you understand, they were Irish and could manage it. There is just one instance of it in the annals, where one of the MacDunlevy kings, a man of evil life, was deposed and put to death by his kinsman. Possibly Mr. Orpen has confused the MacDunlevys with the Plantagenets.

Mr. Orpen gives an extended account of Irish law, with footnotes, references, and all the apparatus of learned exposition, compelling the respect and acquiescence of the less learned reader. Irish law, he tells us, was merely consecrated custom; implying by contrast that England and Normandy were at that time in the enjoyment of codes and statute books. In Irish law, we are told, there were no crimes. No breach of the law was regarded as

an offence against the commonwealth, to be punished by the executive power of the State. The State did not interfere to enforce the law among the subjects. There were, in fact, no penalties. Every offence, from homicide down to the smallest breach of the peace was, in Irish law, merely a tort, a matter for civil litigation between the offended and the offender, and capable of being settled by an assessment of damages. But what was worse still was this, that when judgment was given and the damages assessed, there was no machinery for enforcing obedience to the decree; in legal phraseology, the law had no sanction. Unpopularity, the pressure of public opinion, some sort of boycotting, furnished the only resource of making men amenable to the law and the decrees of the courts. *Credo quia impossibile!*

It was not merely in twelfth-century Ireland that this wildly absurd legal system might be discovered by Alice from Wonderland, even though Giraldus Cambrensis completely failed to make a note of it. The thing was an essential vice of Celtic barbarism, and could be found in full bloom among the Gauls of Cæsar's time. Celts are impossible people, and therefore quite capable of keeping an impossible and utterly negative system of law in full operation for twelve centuries and upwards. The child's game of playing at law-courts which Irish brehons enjoyed in the twelfth century and afterwards had amused the druids of Gaul before the Christian era; and Cæsar himself is called into the witness-box. Certain forms of mental aberration are known to be infectious, and this may explain why all the great feudal lords

of Ireland were fain in time to adopt this preposterous system of Celtic law with all its apparatus. Here is what Cæsar says about the druids and their judicature:

"Whosoever, be it a private individual or a people, does not obey their decree, is excluded from the sacred rites. This among them is a penalty of extreme severity. Those who are under this ban are classed among the impious and the criminal. All men abandon their society and shun their approach and conversation, lest they may suffer harm from contagion with them. When such men seek their legal right it is not rendered to them. When they seek any public office, it is not conferred on them." Mr. Orpen's comment on this passage is concise. "It was," he says, "the primitive boycott." The analogy which he thus brings down to date appears incomplete. If a man having a credit balance at the bank draws a cheque within the amount, he seeks a legal right. If that right is not rendered to him, there is something more than a boycott. Complete divestment of legal rights is not boycotting, it is attainder. It goes a long way beyond the greatest excesses of social ostracism that have been charged against the Land League or the Primrose League.

Mr. Orpen is not satisfied with this exposure of Celtic law at long and at large in his first volume. He repeats it in somewhat varied phrases in the second. Now mark how plain a tale shall put him down. In his search for this particular plum of the Celtophobe, he has travelled to the sixth book and thirteenth chapter of Cæsar's history. Mr. Orpen's

historical method is identical with one of which I have had later experience, when I have seen the file of a periodical presented to the tribunal with a sentence here and a paragraph there marked by the blue pencil of a Crown Prosecutor. There is a first book in Cæsar's Gallic War. It comes before the sixth book. The first episode related in the first book is doubtless familiar to Mr. Orpen since his school days, if the exigencies of the historical indictment of a nation have not compelled him to forget it. Let us recall that first episode of the Gallic War, bearing in mind all the time the doctrine that under Celtic law there were no crimes against the State, no sanction or penalty for breaches of the law except payments in composition, and no machinery for enforcing obedience.

The first episode in the Gallic War is the migration of the Helvetii. Cæsar tells us that this enterprise was undertaken by the Helvetian state at the instance of a great noble named Orgetorix, and that Orgetorix was commissioned to take charge of the preparations. Before all was ready, an accusation was brought forward against him of aiming at the subversion of the republican constitution of the state and at the usurpation of supreme power. This was not a tort, a matter for private litigation. The Helvetii, says Cæsar, according to their custom (it was, therefore, no exceptional proceeding) sought to compel Orgetorix to stand his trial under arrest [*ex vinculis*]. If found guilty, Cæsar adds, the penalty which he must duly incur was death by burning. Here we have the crime, the State tribunal,

the executive authority, and the penalty fore-ordained; not exactly features of "the primitive boycott." Orgetorix, we are told, was by far the greatest and wealthiest noble of his people. He stood in no fear of a boycott. Cæsar continues: "On the day fixed for the trial, Orgetorix gathered from every side and brought with him to the place of judgment all his slaves to the number of ten thousand, and all his dependents and rent-payers, of whom he had a great number. By this array, he extricated himself from being placed on trial." Here was a crucial test of the question, whether there was or was not what Mr. Orpen calls "machinery" for enforcing the law. The State, says Cæsar, (*civitas* is his word) was provoked by this conduct and set about the enforcement of its law by force of arms. The magistrates, meaning in the Roman sense the principal officers of State, collected from the land a large body of men. But while this was going on, Orgetorix died; and it was suspected, so the Helvetii believe, that he committed suicide.

All this is related in the first four chapters of the first book of Cæsar's Gallic War. It is not to the purpose, and so we are invited to judge the case from a blue-pencilled extract from book vi., chapter 13.

The notion of a system of Celtic law from which all cognisance of crimes as crimes, all State authority, all power of enforcement was absent, which had no sanction except public opinion exercised through boycotting, is borrowed from Sir Henry Maine's "Early History of Institutions." Sir Henry Maine, however eminent his authority, acquired this notion from an

inspection of a portion of the Ancient Laws of Ireland. The sort of judicature which he happened to find there was that which was administered by the Irish *brehons* in courts of arbitration. Mr. Orpen shows familiarity with a much wider range of Irish literature in English translations. When he wrote his history, in which he claims expressly for himself the title of historian, he knew certain things, but the necessities of the case compelled him to forget he knew them. He knew quite well that the ancient literature in general ascribes the judicial function to every Irish king, the head of every Irish state, great or small. He knew that a hundred and a hundred times the good king is said to be a just judge, and the unjust judge is said to be a bad king. But when he assumes the *rôle* of historian, he puts the microscope to the blind eye, and, though he knows the facts are before it, he is unable to see and describe them. In the very chapter which contains his indictment of Irish law, he quotes Standish Hayes O'Grady's fine collection of pieces of Irish medieval literature, the *Silva Gadelica*. I observe that his footnote refers the reader to the Irish text, not to the English translation, and the reader may conclude, if it please him, that Mr. Orpen is most at his ease among Irish originals. Since most of those for whom Mr. Orpen's work is intended are not familiar readers of Middle Irish, I would refer them to the volume of the English translations, where they will be able to understand and verify. On page 288 we find how Cormac, a stripling, came to Tara, where in his father's house the usurper MacCon held rule.

When he arrived in the royal house, a lawsuit was in progress. The story proceeds thus:

"There was in Tara a she-hospitaller, Bennaid, whose roaming sheep came and ate up the queen's crop of woad. The case was referred to Lughaidh [MacCon the king] for judgment, and his award was: the queen to have the sheep in lieu of the woad. 'Nay,' Cormac said, 'the shearing of the sheep is a sufficient offset to the cropping of the woad; for both the one and the other will grow again.' 'That is the true judgment,' all exclaimed: 'a very prince's son it is that has pronounced it!' . . . . MacCon's rule in sooth was not good: the men of Ireland warned him off therefore and bestowed it on Cormac."

Here, quite as a matter of course, we find a king sitting in judgment, without even a brehon for assessor, on a civil case of no great importance, a case of damage done by straying sheep. The king judged unfairly, not indeed because it was in his wife's lawsuit, but because he made an award of excessive damages. His people deposed him and gave the kingship to the youth who proposed the fair award. And so intimately was the judicial office combined with the kingly office in the medieval Irish mind, that the capacity of judging rightly was thought to be hereditary in the royal blood: "A true judgment, he who pronounced it is in truth the son of a king!"

From this same work, cited by Mr. Orpen, I could quote example after example of the same fact, quite well known to Mr. Orpen, but "in the heat of

hatching, the hen does not know an egg from a stone." I could also cite a bookful of instances from the annals, the historical poems, the ancient stories, and other sources, showing that the ancient and medieval Irish were quite as familiar as were the magistrates of the Helvetian State with criminal jurisdiction and with penalties in every degree, including the death penalty, as the sanction of their laws.

The normal court of law in ancient Ireland was the king's court, as the normal court in a Gaulish republic was the court of the magistrates of the republic. The druids' tribunal in Gaul and the brehons', also originally the druids' tribunal, in Ireland, was a subsidiary institution. It did not carry with it the plenary powers of the regular tribunal, and therefore relied in part on the reverence of the people for justice—with regard to which we have the most remarkable testimony borne by Englishmen in Ireland at the time when Irish law was on the verge of total abolition. And one of these writers aptly says that nothing that the Irishman does, however praiseworthy, finds favour with a set of men who are his professional traducers.

The brehons were primarily jurists, and in their hands Irish law was elaborated and refined, its development in this respect being similar to the development of Roman law. They acted also as legal advisers to litigants, safeguarding the proper legal form of their proceedings. They acted also as assessors and advisers to the kings in court. When they sat as judges by themselves, their courts

were at least theoretically tribunals of arbitration, but differed from the casual arbitrations of our time in having more of the character of institutions. It is probably true that after the Feudal invasion, and especially when Irish law was adopted by Feudal lords, the brehon's court tended to supersede the court of king or lord as the normal instrument of judicature.

The story of Cormac introduces us to a king's court held at the king's place of abode and in his house. A higher and more ceremonial court was held by the king in the periodical assembly. This court of assembly was called by the name *airecht*, *oireacht*; the word is used to translate the Latin *curia*. "Suit of court" was an Irish no less than a Feudal institution. The kings or lords subject to a presiding king were expected to attend his *airecht*; and from this it comes that these subject lords are collectively called the king's *airecht*, and by a further extension the name is given occasionally to their lands collectively. The whole of O'Cathâin's territory is called Airecht Ui Chathâin, and the territory of O'Connor Kerry still bears the name of Oireacht Ui Chonchobhuir, the barony of Iraghticonnor in Kerry.

The assembly was the focus of the people's life. Kuno Meyer has published and translated into English an ancient tract called *Tecosc Cormaic*, "King Cormac's Instruction to his Son." Every student of early Irish institutions ought to read it. Many who read it will be surprised to find how modern was the mind of antiquity. One of the

maxims which the king gives to his son is this: Vested interests are shameless. There is a truth in that for all peoples of all times, that has never elsewhere been so pithily expressed. The tract consists of a collection of maxims and counsels for a prince in his private and public conduct, and is cast in the form of a colloquy between the king and his son. Reading it, one comes to realise the importance held by the assembly and particularly the court of assembly, the *airecht*, in the minds of our ancestors. Those who wish to study the art of public speaking will find excellent canons of oratory and advocacy in *Tecosc Cormaic;* but they may be forewarned that the ancient standard has no mercy for rhetorical bombast, bounce, or any other device to obscure and mislead the exercise of right judgment by the audience.

The last effort of the people to maintain its assemblies can be seen in those "parles upon hills" which were so obnoxious to the Dublin government under Elizabeth. In place-names and other traditions we can still trace the old assembly places in most parts of the country. Not long ago, in the southern part of County Armagh, a man pointed out to me a smooth green rising ground, and said "The old people say there used to be a parliament there." The old people are not far wrong. In these assemblies, laws were enacted, modified or confirmed, taxes and tributes were regulated. The men of lore came there with their poems in praise of the living and their stories of the olden times and their genealogies. Musicians came, and clowns with their

antics, and sleight-of-hand men. The men of military age came with their arms for weapon-show and then laid their arms aside till the assembly ended. Traders from distant countries came to sell and buy. Horse races and other games were held. The general public, at least in the larger assemblies, were ranged and classed in divisions, and wooden galleries were set up to seat them. Streets of booths were set up for sleeping and eating, giving the place of assembly the temporary aspect of a town, and such towns were, I think, the cities named and placed in Ptolemy's description of Ireland. The detailed account that is extant of the Leinster assembly at Carman, and the rare references in the annals to disturbance of assemblies show that order and peace were in general characteristic of these occasions.

XII. THE IRISH RALLY

THE most casual reader of Irish history knows that within a few centuries of the Norman invasion, the authority of the kings of England had shrunk to within a day's easy ride of Dublin and the outskirts of a few other towns. Standish O'Grady has noted the constant alliance between town and crown in the Middle Ages. It was not peculiar to Ireland. The merchants and the sovereign had a common interest in resisting the encroachments of the great nobles. Even despotic kings, as a rule, governed better in the interest of the burgesses than any powerful oligarchy was likely to govern.

Why did the Norman conquest fail to be a conquest? Giraldus Cambrensis gave to his story the title *Hibernia Expugnata*—"Ireland fought to a finish." Four centuries later comes another historian, telling of another conquest, and he calls his story *Hibernia Pacata*—"Ireland pacified." Why was the second conquest necessary?

There are two factors that make for the completeness and permanence of conquest—namely, physical superiority and moral superiority. In the art of war and in the apparatus of centralised government, the invaders, we have seen, were superior to the Irish. They could even use the Church as an instrument of the State, and Mr. Orpen

boasts that, whereas the Irish bishop of Dublin, Lorcán O'Tuathail, was only a saint, the English bishops who succeeded him were statesmen. Warfare by incastellation, carried on for seventy years, brought three-fourths of the country under control. If to this physical superiority we must add the moral superiority claimed for the Feudal *régime* by modern admirers—if not by its contemporary champion in letters, Giraldus—there is left only one possible explanation of the failure, the perversity of the Irish mind, afflicted with a double dose of original sin, refusing to recognise either physical superiority in the arts of war or moral superiority in the arts of peace.

Another factor must not be forgotten. The second generation of Feudalism in Ireland was in full possession of all the military resources of the greater part of the country. Just as, in the beginning of the invasion, they had led armies of conquered Flemings and conquered Welshmen, and as a few years later they led a force of conquered Norsemen from Dublin to the battle of Thurles, where they were defeated by Domhnall O'Briain, so in their later wars they led armies of conquered Irishmen for the completion of the conquest. And even conquered Irishmen were not bad fighting material.

Two causes have been assigned by modern writers for the failure of the conquest. One cause alleged is the invasion by Edward Bruce in the years 1315 to 1318. In view of the fact that Bruce's undertaking was itself an ignominious failure, another cause assigned is the transference of the Feudal

lordship of Connacht and Ulster from the De Burghs, resident in Ireland, to the Plantagenets, who were absentees. This happened after 1333.

It will be shown that neither of these causes can be held to explain the failure. The conquest was brought to a standstill and the tide was turned more than half a century before the Bruce invasion. The principal factor was national sentiment, intensified and supplied with a more definite political form under a sense of national oppression. Hardly had the sentiment of nationalism acquired this form when a new and unexpected force came to its aid. The value of this new force was crystallised into a proverb by one of the Feudal lords, Sir Robert Savage of the Ards in East Ulster: "Better is a castle of bones than a castle of stones." The policy of conquest by incastellation crumbled away before the castles of bones built up first under the Irish princes of Ulster, afterwards in Connacht, and in time all over Ireland. By a castle of bones, Sir Robert Savage meant a well organised, well armed, and well trained permanent field force. From the days of the Fiana down to the thirteenth century, there had been no such force under the command of an Irish king. Irish law and custom were unfavourable to soldiering as a profession. The new force was not supplied by Irishmen. It came from the Norse kingdom of Argyle and the Hebrides. Already before 1263, when the rulers of this kingdom ceased to be subject to Norway, we find Hebridean leaders helping the Irish of Ulster. Before the close of the thirteenth century, we find organised

bodies of Hebridean fighting men on the Irish side, and a common name for them already in use, Gallóglaich, a word which was afterwards transplanted into English in the form "galloglasses." It means "foreign soldiers." You may learn from a number of books that the galloglasses were heavy-armed Irish soldiers. They were men of Argyle and the Hebrides who came over to Ireland for military service, or descendants of such men who were settled in Ireland and held on to the profession of soldiers. It may possibly be too much to say that no Irish were admitted to their ranks; but with one very doubtful instance every officer of galloglasses that I find named from the thirteenth century, when they are first heard of, until the seventeenth century, when they are last heard of, bears a Hebridean surname; and the surnames of the majority of their commanders indicate descent from Sumarlidi, who established the kingdom of the Hebrides and Argyle in the twelfth century.

A century or so after the introduction of the galloglasses, we find native Irish troops established in imitation of them. These, however, bear a distinct name, *buannadha*, "buonies," meaning men on permanent service.

It was this reintroduction of permanent military organisation that ultimately broke down the force of feudal conquest. But as this preceded the Bruce invasion, so also it will be seen that it was itself preceded by a very definite national rally of the free Irish. Let us trace the course of events in greater detail.

In violation of the Treaty of Windsor, the lordship of all Connacht, still unconquered, had been granted to William de Burgh. Marriage with De Lacy's heiress had added the lordship of all Ulster, likewise unconquered, and the Earls of Ulster, chiefs of the great house of De Burgh, thus became titular lords of two-fifths of Ireland. To make their dominion a reality was a great incentive to the completion of the conquest. Half a century after the invasion, the conquest extended to about two-thirds of the country. In Leinster, the mountainous parts southward from Dublin were unsubdued; and in the midlands a group of the old Irish states, side by side, had resisted penetration, under the O'Connors of western Offaly, the O'Mores of Leix, the Fitz-Patricks of Upper Ossory, and the O'Carrolls of Ely. In Munster, MacCarthy More held out in Muskerry and kept the title of king of Desmond. The kings of Thomond preserved more real power, though part of their territory was occupied by the Norman de Clares. In Connacht, the O'Connor kings were still recognised by the Foreigners, and the kings of Breifne were intact. Along the western seaboard, too, the conquest had not taken effect. The De Burghs were established in the fortress of Galway and in the middle plain of Connacht. In the other parts of Leinster and Munster, and all over the old kingdom of Meath, the Irish states had either been altogether subverted or reduced to subjection.

In Ulster, the Earls of Ulster held effective dominion over so much territory as is now comprised in the counties of Down and Antrim.

The Irish rally may be dated from the year 1241. In that year Maeleachlainn O'Domhnaill became king of Tir Conaill, and by his aid Brian O'Neill became king of Tir Eoghain, defeating in battle the last king of the MagLochlainn line, one who was favourable to the Foreigners and no doubt acknowledged the dominion of the Earl of Ulster. The viceroy, or, as he was then called, justiciar, of the English king as lord of Ireland, was Maurice Fitz-Gerald. He was the most active and enterprising of the new rulers since the first generation of bold adventurers had passed away, and he set himself the task of completing the conquest of Ireland by making the Earl de Burgh effective ruler of his titular lordships of Connacht and Ulster. In Connacht, he succeeded so far as to make the king of Connacht, Feidhlimidh O'Connor, his subject ally, allowing him to retain the title of king. In 1242, Fitzgerald took the first step towards the reduction of Ulster by leading an army from Connacht against Tir Conaill and compelling the king, Maeleachlainn O'Domhnaill, to give him hostages. As yet, no fresh occupation of Ulster territory was attempted.

From the earliest times until the Confiscation of Ulster, the southern frontier of that province made invasion difficult. It was protected by broad lakes and rivers and deep woods, and probably also by the remains of that great ancient line of earthworks of which I have spoken in an earlier lecture. When Ulster was invaded by land, the approach was almost always on the eastern side from Dundalk or Ardee towards Armagh, or on the western side

between Lower Loch Erne and the sea-coast. Maurice FitzGerald planned to invade it, building castles as he gained ground, both on east and west. In 1244 we read of a new castle built at Donaghmoyne, near Carrickmacross.

Next year, 1245, FitzGerald was summoned by Henry III. to aid him in an invasion of Wales. He went across with an Irish army and his subject king of Connacht. The enterprise did not answer expectation, and Henry sent FitzGerald back deprived of the viceroyship. FitzGerald nevertheless resumed his plan of conquest, the new viceroy, FitzGeoffroi, seconding him. In 1247 he built a castle at Sligo, as a basis of operations towards the Erne. This done, the next step was to seize and fortify the passage of the Erne at Ballyshannon; but he found the king of Tir Conaill there on guard. FitzGerald ordered his Connacht auxiliaries to pretend a retirement and to make a circuit crossing the Erne some miles further up. The stratagem succeeded. The king of Tir Conaill, attacked in front and flank, was defeated and fell in the fight. At his side fell a chief named MacSomhairlidh, "the son of Sumarlidi." This name is the first sign of the Hebridean Galloglach element in Irish wars.

Next year, 1248, the justiciar FitzGeoffroi cooperated in the campaign against Ulster. He led an army to Coleraine, where already there was a castle on the eastern side of the Bann. He built a bridge and built a second castle on the western side, thus securing a new way for invasion. Brian O'Neill did not remain inactive. He brought ships over

land from Loch Foyle to Loch Erne, and attacked and demolished a castle at Belleek, newly built by FitzGerald. Fast upon this followed a revolt of Feidhlimidh O'Connor. The viceroy marched to FitzGerald's aid and Feidhlimidh was driven out, but returned next year and continued to hold his own.

In 1250, taking advantage of a dispute about the succession, FitzGerald invaded Tir Conaill but did not remain there. In 1252, he renewed the attack, building a new castle near Belleek and another on the eastern frontier near Banbridge. The viceroy also came on with a strong army, penetrating into Tir Eoghain by way of Armagh. O'Neill bent before the storm and made submission. This was the culminating point. Next year, 1253, hoping to enforce his advantage, the viceroy once more invaded Tir Eoghain, but this time he obtained no submission and was forced to retreat with heavy loss. O'Neill forthwith took the offensive, invaded the Earl of Ulster's territory, and destroyed a number of castles including the new castle near Banbridge. There is a lull at the turning of the tide. For several years, hostilities cease on both sides. Then in 1257, Godfrey O'Domhnaill, king of Tir Conaill, destroys again the castle of Caoluisce near Belleek and attacks Sligo, burning the town. Retiring, he fights a rearguard action, and both he and Maurice FitzGerald receive wounds of which they afterwards die.

Under the following year, 1258, is chronicled an event in itself of the greatest significance and also an index of the significance of foregoing events. Of

the unsubdued Irish outside of Ulster, the chief potentates at this time were Tadhg O'Briain, king of Thomond, and Aodh O'Connor, king of Connacht, son of Feidhlimidh who had cast off the authority of FitzGerald and De Burgh. These two kings assembled their nobles and their forces and marched together to Caoluisce on the Erne, the site of the demolished fort. They met there Brian O'Neill, king of Tyrone, " and," says the annalist, " all those nobles gave the supreme authority to Brian O'Neill." That is to say, so far as lay in their power, by a spontaneous act, they restored the monarchy of Ireland.

Therefore, when I say that Brian O'Neill's defence of Ulster, with the co-operation of the kings of Tir-Conaill, marks the definite rallying point against the Norman conquest, I give something more than a private opinion or a modern inference. It is a fact to which, in the year 1258 on the banks of the Erne, the kings and nobles and fighting men of Thomond and Connacht, as well as of Tyrone, render the clearest and most solemn testimony possible. Never before in Irish history had the chief provincial kings thus spontaneously and peacefully awarded the high-kingship to one of their number. The act implied a repudiation of the authority that set up feudal lords over Irish kings, and amounted to a declaration of national independence. Half a century later, Brian O'Neill's son, in a letter to the Pope, again declares the Plantagenet lordship of Ireland to be null and void and asserts the right of the Irish to determine their own sovereignty.

These facts prove that the first factor in the Irish rally of the thirteenth century was the sense of nationality, intensified by adversity. Of this we shall see new and striking proofs.

About this time, the Irish began to strengthen their domestic polity by adopting the custom of tanistry.

In 1260, Brian O'Neill led an army of Ulstermen and Connachtmen against the Earl of Ulster's stronghold, Downpatrick. The viceroy, warned of his movements, was there to meet him. Brian was defeated and killed, and, as though his death were a greater glory than his life, he is known to his countrymen of later times as Brian Catha an Dúin, "Brian of the Battle of Down."

Three years later, in 1263, when king Hakon of Norway came with his fleet to the Hebrides, he received a message from Ireland. Sir George Dasent, the English editor of the history of king Hakon, undertakes to say quite gratuitously and quite as absurdly that this embassy in 1263 came from the Ostmen of Dublin. The facts are related by Sturla, a contemporary, a councillor of king Hakon, and no doubt on the testimony of eye-witnesses. Sturla and his informants knew the difference between Ostmen and Irishmen. Sturla says that, after Hakon's first arrival in the Hebrides, "there came these messages to him from Ireland, that the Irishmen offered to come into his power, and said they needed much that he should free them from that thraldom which the English had laid on them, for that they held then all the best towns along the sea. But when

king Hakon lay at Gigha (off Cantire) he sent men out to Ireland in a light cutter, and that man with them who was called Sigurd the South-Islander (*i.e.* the Hebridean, no doubt as interpreter). They were to find out in what way the Irish invited them to come thither." Before their return, Hakon's expedition had proved unsuccessful. As he lay at Lamlash, in the Firth of Clyde, "thither came to him those men that he had sent to Ireland, and told him that the Irish would keep the whole host that winter, on the understanding that king Hakon would free them from the sway of the English. King Hakon was very much inclined to sail to Ireland, but that was much against the mind of all his people. And so, because the wind was not fair, then the king held a *thing* (*i.e.* an assembly) with his force, and gave it out that he would give them all leave to sail to the Hebrides as soon as the wind was fair; for the host had fallen short of victuals."

It is not unlikely that Hakon gave the Irish to understand that he would come to them later. The entry of his death in the Annals of Ulster shows that at that time, two months after he left Lamlash, he was expected in Ireland. The annalist says: "Ebdonn, king of Norway, dies in the Orkney Islands on his way to Ireland."

Here we have the second attempt within fifteen years on the part of the Irish to determine the sovereignty under which they were to live. There was a third attempt, in 1314, after the battle of Bannockburn, when Domhnall, son of Brian O'Neill, with other Irish princes, offered the sovereignty of

Ireland to Robert Bruce, and, at his instance, chose his brother Edward to be king of Ireland.

A rapid survey of events will enable us to trace the development of the Irish resistance from these beginnings. We shall see the extension of Irish rule over territories once in Feudal occupation, the destruction or reduction of Feudal castles, the building of castles by the Irish, the spread of the galloglass organisation, the renewal of distinctive elements of national life.

Since the immigration of Hebridean soldiers was continuous for about three centuries, so as to form a considerable new element in the population of Ireland, and since their descendants are numerous among us to-day, I shall put in a word here about the principal families that reached Ireland in this way.

In Tir Conaill, the leaders of galloglasses belonged to the family of MacSuibhne, englished MacSweeny or Sweeny.

In Tir Eoghain, MacDomhnaill (englished MacDonnell and MacConnell), MacRuaidhri (englished MacRory and Rogers), and MacDubhghaill (englished MacDugall in Scotland, MacDowell and Doyle and Coyle in Ireland). These three families are descended from Sumarlidi, first king of Argyle and the Hebrides.

In Connacht, MacDomhnaill, MacRuaidhri and MacSuibhne. In Munster, MacSuibhne and Mac Sithigh (englished MacSheehy, Sheehy, and Shee). This family is a branch of the MacDonnell family. In Leinster, MacDomhnaill. In Oriel, MacCába, "MacCabe."

Of galloglass commanders on record, those of the race of Sumarlidi far outnumber all the rest together.

The galloglass chiefs obtained grants of land for their support. About a fourth of the whole territory of Tir Conaill was held by the three MacSuibhnes. Besides these principal names, many less prominent surnames, especially in Ulster, are of galloglass origin.

The events hereinafter related are drawn from the Annals of Ulster mainly.

In 1264, the year after Hakon's death, Aodh Buidhe O'Neill, who succeeded Brian as king of Tir Eoghain, extended his sovereignty over Oriel. After his time, the kings of Tir Eoghain take the title of kings of Ulster.

1265. The kings of Connacht and Tir Conaill join forces and destroy the castle of Sligo.

1267. Murchadh MacSuibhne is captured by the Earl of Ulster and dies in prison. He is the first of his surname in the Irish record.

1269. Roscommon castle built by the viceroy D'Ufford, and Sligo Castle rebuilt.

1270. The king of Connacht defeats the Earl of Ulster (lord of Connacht), and next year destroys the castles of Teach Teampla, Roscommon, Sligo, and 'Ath Liag; and the year after, 1272, he destroys the castle of Rinndown. This king of Connacht was the same who joined in offering the sovereignty of Ireland to Brian O'Neill in 1258.

In 1278, Donnchadh O'Briain, king of Thomond, defeated the Earl of Clare at Quin. His father had been taken three years earlier by the same Earl of

Clare and put to death by being drawn asunder by four horses.

In 1286, Ricard de Burgh, the Red Earl of Ulster, comes to the front with a sustained effort to recover power in Ulster and Connacht. Several times he forced a king of his own choosing on Tír Eoghain in place of Domhnall O'Neill, son of Brian of the Battle of Down. Domhnall, however, time after time recovered the kingship, and held it until his death in 1325.

1289. De Birmingham is defeated by the Irish of Offaly, under their king, Calbhach O'Conor.

1290. Toirdhealbach O'Domhnaill, "with the help of his mother's kindred, the MacDonnells of Scotland, and many other galloglasses," deposes his brother and makes himself king of Tir Conaill. This is the first mention of galloglasses by name and also of the MacDonnells as galloglass chiefs, in the Annals of Ulster, but the context indicates that the word was already in established use.

1291. The Red Earl exacts the hostages of Connacht and harries Tir Conaill.

1292. FitzGerald of Offaly rebuilds the castle of Sligo and takes the king of Connacht prisoner. Next year, this king, having got free, destroys the castle of Sligo.

1295. Geoffrey O'Farrell destroys three border castles of Meath. The O'Farrell territory was at this time a small part of the present county of Leitrim. It was gradually extended after this until it comprised the county of Longford in addition. Longford takes its name from Longphort Ui Fhear-

ghail, "O'Farrell's camp," a name significant of the new military organisation.

1305. Sir Piers de Bermingham caused three of the Irish ruling family of Offaly and twenty-nine nobles of their people to be murdered at a banquet to which he had invited them in his own castle. For this he received a reward in money from the Viceroy and Council, with the consent of Ricard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster.

In the same year, the Earl of Ulster built a castle in Inishowen, no doubt with a view to commanding Loch Foyle and hindering the landing of galloglasses. It may be noted that the Irish name of Milford Haven, a little farther west, is Port na nGalloglach, "the port of the galloglasses." This year we find a MacSuibhne in command of galloglasses in Breifne.

1307. Donnchadh O'Ceallaigh, king of Ui Maine, in retaliation for the burning of his town of Ath Eascrach, attacks Roscommon, kills a great part of the defenders, and captures the Sheriff.

1308. The Foreigners of North Connacht are defeated by the Irish at Ballysodare.

1310. Geoffrey O'Farrell marches against Donore Castle in Westmeath, and Ruaidhri, king of Connacht, attacks the De Burgh castle of Bun Finne.

1315. At the instance of the northern Irish, Robert Bruce, having himself declined to accept the sovereignty of Ireland, sends his brother Edward to Ireland at the head of a strong expedition.

Now that we have reached this point, it is fairly evident that the Bruce invasion, so far from being the origin or cause of the Irish reaction against

Feudalism and the English sovereignty, was itself a consequence of that reaction. Notwithstanding several great victories and successful marches through the country, Edward Bruce showed himself incapable of any constructive policy. His victories were more than counterbalanced by the crushing defeat of the western Irish at Athenry and by his own defeat and death at Fochairt, near Dundalk, in 1318. The northern annalist, in chronicling this event, makes it plain that the Irish of Ulster who suffered least during the invasion, knew no reason to grieve over its ending. This is his record of the event:

1318. "Edward Bruce, the destroyer of Ireland in general, of Irish as well as Foreigners, is killed by the Foreigners of Ireland through strength of fighting at Dundalk, and along with him are killed MacRuaidhri, king of the Hebrides, and MacDomhnaill, king of Argyle." In the previous year, the same annalist tells that Robert Bruce came to Ireland to aid his brother in expelling the Foreigners, and brought with him many galloglasses. It may be noted that the purpose, "to expel the Foreigners," is identical with that proposed half a century earlier by the Irish embassy to King Hakon. The failure of Edward Bruce, after a campaign of four years, must have restored some of the lost prestige of the Feudal colonists. On the other hand, the Irish of Thomond, by the defeat and death of Ricard de Clare, rid themselves of invasion.

We come now to the next event which has been described as the turning point in the fortunes of the great struggle. In 1326, the Red Earl died,

having recovered all that he had lost in East Ulster from Bruce's occupation, but not all in the same condition as before. He was succeeded by his son, the Brown Earl, William de Burgh. A feud arose among the De Burghs, and the young earl captured his kinsman Walter de Burgh, and starved him to death in the Red Earl's new castle of Inishowen. Death by starvation in prison is so frequent an incident of the Feudal *regime* as to suggest that these magnates obeyed the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," by allowing God to allow their enemy to die, themselves not interfering. The event shows that, despite the Bruce invasion, the old earl held on to his isolated fortress among his Ulster enemies. The kinsmen and friends of Walter de Burgh avenged his death by assassinating the young earl near Carrickfergus. He died without male heir, his sole child, an infant daughter, became by law the ward of the king of England, who made her over in marriage, with the titular lordships of Connacht and Ulster, to his son Lionel, duke of Clarence.

Sir John Gilbert, in his history of the Viceroys of Ireland, writes soberly and judiciously. He has one weakness. Just as Mr. Orpen revels in grants of land, which he takes to be the bedrock of civilisation, and therefore declares to have been no structural element in the Irish polity, attaching to them a sacred efficacy of which neither Henry II. nor John nor their grantees in Ireland appear to have been fully sensible; so Gilbert revels in details of court procedure, and overloads his book with them: to be excused, perhaps, on the ground that he is writing

the history of a court not of a country and people. Gilbert does not regard the Bruce invasion as a deciding factor in the attempted conquest; but he does attach this character to the demise of the Feudal lordships of Connacht and Ulster from the great house of De Burgh, resident in Ireland, upon a branch of the Plantagenets, absentees in England. He pictures to us the De Burgh chiefs forthwith abandoning their allegiance to the English sovereign as lord of Ireland and at the same time suddenly adopting the language, laws, customs and manners of the Irish; and the other Feudal lords infected by their example. We may readily believe that the titular dominion of the De Burgh earls over Connacht and Ulster had been a strong incentive to urge them to complete the conquest of those provinces, and the Feudal authority exercised by the earls, backed up by the power of the viceroys, furnished military resources which might conceivably have sufficed for such a conquest. It is further probable that Feudal law, so far as it could subject the De Burghs to the dominion of an absent prince, found little favour with them. There is no evidence forthcoming that the De Burghs in the fourteenth century were more reverent than De Prendergast, De Courci, or the De Lascis of the invasion period in their interpretation of the obligations of Feudal allegiance. Their loyalty was measured by the power and prestige of their overlord, so far as he could make it felt. The decline of the Feudal regime was as much cause as effect of the estrangement of the De Burghs from the English interest. As for any sudden change of

language, we must bear in mind that the "Anglo-Normans" of the invasion did not speak English. So far as their language was not French, it was Welsh, with a mixture of Flemish. There was not much use for any of these languages in Connacht, where the De Burghs and other Feudal settlers led Irish armies and intermarried with Irish families. In short, the sudden and deliberate turning Irish of the De Burghs, after they had killed off their last earl, seems to be no better than a fantastic inference. Instead of adopting any common counsel or common policy, the De Burgh chiefs, after the Earl's assassination, engaged in violent warfare against each other.

From this time on we can trace the gradual and rapid spread of the galloglass organisation in various parts of Ireland; and this continues until the time of Elizabeth who employed galloglasses on her own side and rewarded their chiefs with grants of Irish land. Meanwhile resurgent Ireland began to assimilate her "Old Foreigners." In 1374, the annalist, recording the death of Jenkin Savage, says that "he leaves poetry an orphan." This foster-father of Irish poetry was of the family of old Sir Robert Savage who said "a castle of bones is better than a castle of stones," Feudal lord of the Ards in East Ulster.

The year after his death, 1375, a second battle of Downpatrick was fought. The Irish were commanded by Niall O'Neill, great-grandson of "Brian of the battle of Down," so little were the Irish of that age daunted by the apparent disasters of their forefathers. The Foreigners were commanded by

Sir James Talbot of Malahide. O'Neill was victorious. Talbot fell in the fight. The battle put an end to the Feudal dominion established over East Ulster by the valiant de Courci. Of this fact we have a striking proof in the succession of bishops to the sees, then separate, of Down and Connor. From De Courci's time until the second battle of Down, during two centuries, no man of the Irish nation had been allowed to hold either bishopric. Soon after this, we find appointed bishop of Connor a man named O'Lúcharáin, and Irish surnames become very frequent in the clergy of both Down and Connor.

In 1384, Niall O'Neill attacked and destroyed the fortress of Carrickfergus, and (says the annalist) "obtained great power over the Foreigners." In 1392, the Feudal colonists of Dundalk submitted to him. In the record of his death in 1397, he is entitled "king of Ulster."

About this time, Eoin MacDomhnaill, brother to Domhnall of Harlaw, king of Argyle and the Islands, acquired the Feudal title to the Glens of Antrim through marriage to the heiress of Biset. Having taken possession, the MacDonnells did not concern themselves about Feudal duties to an overlord, an Earl of Mortimer or an Earl of March. Afterwards, in the official language of the Elizabethan government, the MacDonnells of the Glens were intruding Scots: a point of view which their chief, Somhairle Buidhe, countered bluntly by proclaiming that "plainly the English have no right to be in Ireland."

In the fourteenth century and still more in the fifteenth, the Irish built castles for themselves and took possession of many castles built for their subjugation. They turned the policy of incastellation against its proprietors and patentees. In this they were facilitated by the galloglass organisation, always ready for military service. The principal family of galloglass chiefs, the MacDonnells, had for their heraldic motto " Toujours prêts "—" always ready." In this period, too, a number of the old petty kingdoms, after long abeyance under Feudal lords, once more emerge into prominence.

In 1423, the Irish of Tír Eoghain and Tir Conaill, aided now by the Irish of East Ulster, defeat the viceroy, the Earl of Ormond, at Dundalk. In 1425, the Earl of March, heir to the lordship of Ulster and Connacht, is sent to Ireland as viceroy and receives the formal submission of the Ulster princes. This does not count for much, for in five years time Eoghan O'Neill, son of the king of Ulster, received in his father's name the allegiance of O'Farrell, king of Annaly, O'Connor, king of Offaly, O'Molloy, king of Fir Ceall, O'Melaghlin, titular king of Meath, and other Irish rulers in the midlands; also of Nugent, Baron of Delvin, the Plunkets, the Herberts, and the Foreigners of Westmeath in general. This, in the year 1430, marks the highest point of power reached by the kings of Tir Eoghain at any time. On his father's death in 1432, Eoghan O'Neill, says the annalist, " went to Tulach 'Og, and was there inaugurated king on the stone of the kings by the will of God and men, of bishops and chief poets."

In the year following, 1433, Margaret, daughter of O'Carroll, king of Eile, and wife of O'Connor, king of Offaly, held those two festivals for the learned of Ireland that have been justly described as national events of high and singular importance, proving that the Irish of that time acted on a clear and definite consciousness of nationality. It should however, be made plain that Margaret's achievement marked no new expression of the national consciousness, either in conception or execution. Eighty-two years earlier, in 1351, what we may call a fair of Irish learning was held by William O'Kelly, king of Ui Maine, in his own territory.

A contemporary account of O'Kelly's assemblage has been left us by one of his guests, Gofraidh Fionn 'O Dálaigh, official poet to MacCarthy, king of Desmond. Miss Knott, who has edited the poem in *'Eriu*,[1] says properly that these assemblies of the learned under Irish rulers had a political import: the poets fulfilling in that age a function proper to the journalists of our time.

The poet makes the occasion clear. O'Kelly had regained power in his ancestral territory, long under the control of the Foreigners, whom he had expelled, and was about to divide it again among his own people. In celebration of his good fortune, he offers a Christmas feast to all the men of learning and art of his nation: to the seven orders of poets, to the jurists, the historians, musicians, craftsmen, and jugglers also and jesters. Wide avenues were laid out with lines of conical roofed houses of timber

[1] "Eriu," vol. V., page 50.

and wickerwork: a street for the poets, one for the musicians, one for the chroniclers and genealogists, one for the rhymers and jugglers. These structures are compared to the letters on a page, O'Kelly's castle to the illuminated capital letter at their head. Craftsmen are busy carving animal figures on its oakwork. It is in the midst of a rich country, reconquered by O'Kelly. On its bounds are Athenry, Athlone, and Athleague, three famous fords. "Loch Derg, a cause of pride, Loch Ree with its green marshes, these blue bays on which the sun shines brightly are the boundaries of William's land." Before William's ancestors, the land belonged to the hero Goll MacMorna and his brethren. It is a country of plenty, with every variety of surface, tillage and grasslands and forest. "We men of learning have come through evil days—the time of conquest and disruption—our lore neglected, our affluence reduced, most of our country against us; but a better time has come. Our host to-night has delivered us from sorrow."

It was among a people once more confident of the future that a congress of this kind was planned and successfully held. The poet bears witness that the king's invitation has brought together a concourse from every part of Ireland, from Ulster, Thomond, Desmond, Leinster and Meath. The annals tell us they came away well pleased. Could any event be more typical of a conscious and constructive national idea?

In 1387, Niall 'O'Néill the younger, in the reign of his father, the victor of Downpatrick, built a

hostel for the learned of all Ireland in Eamhain Macha, the site of the ancient home of the kings of Ulster. Margaret O'Carroll's great festival of the learned in 1433 was thus the third such occasion within three generations, noteworthy above the other two in this respect among others, that it revived the fulness of national tradition on the very borders of the Pale.

The true beginning of the Irish rally was in the minds of those kings and nobles and fighting men of Thomond and Connacht who marched to the Erne in 1258 to offer the headship of the free Irish to a king of Tir Eoghain. Both O'Brien and O'Connor were closer in the line of descent to kings of Ireland than O'Neill was. There was no country in Europe at that time whose magnates were not willing to have civil war rather than abandon plausible claims to sovereignty. From this worthy beginning I have traced the progress of resurgent Ireland down to a worthy fruition, the generous homage of an Irish queen to that literary tradition which, as Mrs. Green has so clearly shown us in a recent work, is the most characteristic element in Irish nationality. And there I leave the story.

Another time of dark adversity came afterwards. What stands for the history of Ireland in that dark time is mainly the history of a government which nobody pretends to have been Irish. We need a new history from the fifteenth century onward, written out of the records of the Irish people. But as I have set down the Irish rally as the subject of

this lecture, I may properly be asked how this resurgent movement ended. I shall go as near as I can to imitate the brevity of Sir Robert Savage. The Plantagenets invoked Peter, the Tudors invoked saltpetre. When the Plantagenets undertook to become missionaries in Ireland, and incidentally to pay Peter's Pence, as Giraldus says, out of the profits, they were under the impression that Irish kings had control of secret gold mines. When Elizabeth's ministers professed a yearning to bring the Irish to civility, they were calculating how much land could be acquired by the expenditure of the stock of saltpetre available from time to time at so much per ton. It may shock the proper sense of the "Ireland under" historians that this villainous substance should be blown betwixt the wind and their civility, but just as the true keynote of what is called "Ireland under the Normans" is incastellation, so the true keynote of "Ireland under the Tudors" is gunpowder. There is more mental profit in one fact of this kind than in the painful perusal of stacks of State papers, evidence mainly against those who write them.

I must say that Irish history in the diatribal stage afflicts me much less than Irish history in popular handbooks. This lecture has not exhausted the subject from the time of Brian O'Neill to the time of Margaret O'Carroll—less than two centuries. I claim to have shown evidence of real life, growth, development, purpose and spirit in the Irish nation during that time. Take up one of these popular handbooks and what will you find?

The dissensions of the Irish clans, Edward Bruce's invasion, the perpetual Statute of Kilkenny, and how Richard II. fared in Ireland. Much is made of the Statute of Kilkenny, as though its oppressive operation were a necessary consequence of its record on the Statute Book. The Irish dissensions are gravely deprecated. They are the whole history of the nation during all this period, and one example is given as sufficing for all. It tells how Godfrey O'Donnell, after his fight with FitzGerald near Sligo, returned to Tir Conaill never to recover from his wounds; how Brian O'Neill used the occasion to invade Tir Conaill; how O'Donnell had himself borne on a litter at the head of his forces, routed O'Neill, and died in the hour of victory. All this story indeed is related in a Latin chronicle of uncertain date and the place of battle is not mentioned. The contemporary Annals of Ulster are the most copious and minute record for that time of the affairs of Tir Eoghain and Tir Conaill, having been written not far from the border of the two territories. They say nothing about an invasion of Tir Conaill or about any battle or hostility between the two kings. They relate the death of O'Donnell in these words only: "*quievit in Christo*"—"he fell asleep in Christ," the customary formula of the obit of a churchman or of a layman who died in religious retirement in a monastery. This leaves the romantic battle story open to question. Whether the story be truth or fiction, when it stands with Edward Bruce, Richard II., and the Statute of Kilkenny, as a representation of Irish history during the period

with which this lecture is concerned, it is not the truth of history. Not indolence nor want of access to the materials produces popular history of this sort. It is the product of a peculiar obsession of mind, that makes Ireland appear a sort of hotel, in which the important people are always distinguished visitors, and the permanent residents, when they are not under orders, are occupied with quarrelling children and other household worries in the garret or the basement.

I have said in a former lecture that the "clan system," or, as some prefer to say, the "tribal system," of medieval Ireland, is a modern notion and is an illusion. Its basis is found in the prominence given in Irish literature to the aristocratic kindreds and in the Irish custom of naming territorial divisions by the names of the septs to which their lords belonged. From this has arisen the notion that the sept or clan from whom a territory was named was the people of the territory. The illusion has been enlarged by the loose use of the term "tribe," which quotation has shown applied to a family group consisting of the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of one man; the same term being applied to an ancient aristocratic kindred like Dal Cuinn, spread over nearly half of Ireland. Common tenure of land by a family group, necessitating redistribution of the land as new generations come forward, with the use of the term "tribe" to denote such groups, has created the further illusion of a tribal territory held in common and periodically redistributed. These things being illusions, I am

reminded that I have not endeavoured to set out the facts in their stead.

Let me then take a particular territory like William O'Kelly's kingdom of Ui Maine. In the fifth century, the lordship of this territory, carrying the title of king, was granted by a king of Connacht to his kinsman Maine. His descendants, called Ui Maine, were the principal nobility of the territory in later times. Before Maine, the territory belonged to a Pictish folk, the Sogini or Soghain, also found in other parts of the country. This Pictish folk continued to inhabit the territory under the rule of the sept of Maine, and under the subordinate rule of their own nobles. But even before Maine's time, the population did not consist of a homogeneous tribe of Sogini, for we find record of another folk dwelling there, distinguished from the Picts and classed among the Fir Iboth, *i.e.* the Ebudeans or Hebrideans; and their descendants also remained in occupation, and are named and located in medieval documents. Successive conquests established various degrees of freedom, the measure of freedom being the degree of immunity from tributes and services. Besides these permanent inhabitants, there were landless immigrants who obtained holdings of land on very exacting terms, mitigated, however, by law after long continued occupancy. At the bottom of the scale, there were slaves, who could be bought, sold, or given away. In historical time, the slaves were never numerous.

In addition there were professional men, the brehons or jurists, the poets and historians, the

physicians, the musicians; and with these must be classed the master craftsmen. All these had lands for their support. In the later age, lands were also set apart for the captains of galloglasses and the constables of castles. The law of the family or the *fine* governed all property in land, including the high proprietorship of the ruler. Under this and other influences, every calling tended to be hereditary in the Irish sense, not necessarily from father to son, but within the legal family group. It is even clear from the annals that the clergy were drawn from certain families much more than from others.

There were common rights over rough land unsuitable for tillage. The remainder of the land was apportioned among family groups. There may have been an older system of a more communal character, for there is a tradition or legend about the enclosure and specific apportionment of the lands of Ireland in the reign of Aodh Sláine, about A.D. 600.

Any king or lord could make grants of land within his jurisdiction; and this can be shown to have been done in every age from the fifth to the sixteenth century.

In every large territory there were church lands. The inhabitants of a church estate formed a little body politic by themselves, with a chief of their own, the *airchinnech* (oirchinneach, "erenach," or "herenagh"). O'Donovan thought that the lay succession to this title was a consequence of the disorder caused by the Norse wars; in any case, it was merely an assimilation of the temporal govern-

ment of church lands to the ordinary civil polity. The *airchinnech* was obliged to provide from his revenue for the support of the clergy and the maintenance of religious services. Otherwise, his status was that of any territorial lord. In medieval Ireland, as elsewhere, we find the conflict between Church and State about the immunity of Church possessions from rendering tributes and services to the secular prince.

On broad and simple lines, the government of an Irish State resembled that of the Roman republic, with the king added as chief officer of State. Authority belonged to the patrician class, conditioned only by the prudential maxim, *is treise tuath na tighearna*—"a people is stronger than a lord." Of the election of a king I know only one detailed account—the last instance in history—the election of Aodh Ruadh O'Domhnaill in 1593. The nobles, meeting apart, came to a decision, and then brought it before the popular assembly for ratification. New laws, and even important legal decisions, such as the sentence of death or deposition of a king, were also proposed for ratification by assemblies.

The executive functions of the king and the relations of subordinate to superior kings are well indicated in a law tract printed by Meyer in *Eriu*. It deals with a case in which a plaintiff or creditor has a claim to recover against a defendant or debtor who belongs to a different State. The plaintiff's king has no jurisdiction over the defendant. He must refer it to the next superior

king, called "the king of a major State." If the defendant is outside of this king's jurisdiction, the major king must have recourse to the next higher authority, traditionally called "the king of a fifth." This king, if his jurisdiction does not extend to the defendant, must take the case to the king of Ireland, whose duty it will then be to levy the claim.

From this it follows that, when the parties at litigation were both subjects of the same petty king, it was his duty and function to give effect to the law as between them.

The Irish Record Reports contain particulars of a class of State papers, the Fiants, which, especially for the reign of Elizabeth, contain lists of the principal followers of various Irish chiefs. No one who examines these lists will entertain the illusion that the people of an Irish territory were a homogeneous clan. In a single list of the principal followers of O'Donnell, there are close on 150 distinct surnames, and among these the O'Donnells form a very small fraction. With regard to occupation, in these lists we find gentlemen, yeomen, husbandmen, surgeons, physicians, priests, rhymers, harpers, pipers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, tailors, butchers, carpenters, masons, etc., and on the military side, horsemen, kerns, and galloglasses.

There is no doubt that life in ancient Ireland was for the most part rural life. It did not reach that social intensity and complexity which are peculiar to towns and to countries in which town life is dominant. Nevertheless it was probably as high

a development of rural life as any country had produced in any age.

What I have said about Irish institutions has of necessity taken often the form of an apologia; of necessity, because I have found the balance heavily weighted down. But, one may object, there must have been some radical defect in this ancient civilisation, otherwise its inherent soundness would have been more secure against either castles or saltpetre. How came it that a brave and intelligent and energetic people did not keep itself in the forefront of western development?

My answer to that is, that Ireland was ruled by a patrician class—and that is not all, for other countries have made remarkable progress under a patrician rule. The Irish nobility were rendered incapable of using their intelligence to profit with the times by one defect—they were perhaps the most intensely proud class of men that ever existed. This pride was bred in their bones. It came to them out of an immemorial past. The history of the Gaelic people falls into cycles of four centuries, beginning with our earliest knowledge of the Celts in the Hallstatt Period. There are four centuries of conquest, expansion and domination, before the Celts came to Ireland. By this time, pride of race was already their dominant sentiment. A Latin poet has described a Celtic general:

"Before the rest, the rapid wing of the Boii, led on by Crixus, charges headlong into the foremost ranks and their gigantic limbs engage in battle, Crixus himself, swelling with ancestral pride, boasted

his descent from Brennus, and bore for his token the capture of the Capitol. His shield depicted the Celts weighing out the gold of Rome. His milk-white neck gleamed with a golden torque, his raiment was embroidered with gold, the sleeves were stiff with gold, and the same metal formed his helmet's nodding crest."

Four centuries more established the Celtic rule in Ireland. Their rule in Ireland remained secure during four centuries of Roman domination in Gaul and Britain. During four centuries of Germanic invasion and conquest, Ireland stood intact. After four centuries of Norse supremacy over neighbouring seas and lands, Ireland emerged unconquered. Two thousand years of unbroken sway may suffice to set pride above prudence in the tradition of any class. At the end of another cycle, when the Irish nobles were scattered over Europe, the nobility of their bearing and the distinction of their manners won admiration for them in every land but one.

This intense pride is blazoned on the pages of our medieval literature, in annals, genealogies, stories, poems. The poets lived by ministering to it. In this respect, too, we can see the analogy with a good deal of modern journalism.

Too much pride blinded the native rulers of Ireland to the insecurity of their state, and made them careless of their safety, and neglectful of the measures it required. Glorying in the long vista of their past, they did not look before them. They were conservative, inadaptable, unproviding. Herein lay the fatal weakness of medieval Ireland.

We are now nearing the end of the seventh cycle. It has brought us a different experience. I must not speculate upon the outcome. If only I have succeeded in convincing you that Irish history must contain life, movement, colour, coherence, and human interest, beyond anything depicted of it in many books that have been written about it, with that and the recollection of your kind support I make a well contented conclusion.

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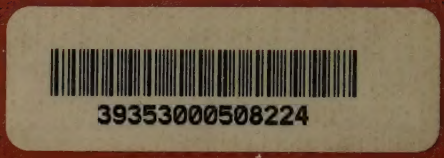
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